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FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

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NEW ORLEANS CONVENTION PAGE 40

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THE AMERICAN
LEGION

Vol. 145, No. 5 **The Magazine for a Strong America** November 1998

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COVER *Desert Storm*/painting by Mike Hagel. The original of this rendering hangs in the National Executive Committee room of The American Legion National Headquarters. Information on acquiring poster-size copies autographed by some of the subjects depicted is available on page 7.

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.7 million members. These wartime veterans, working through nearly 15,000 community-level Posts, dedicate themselves to God and country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youths.

18

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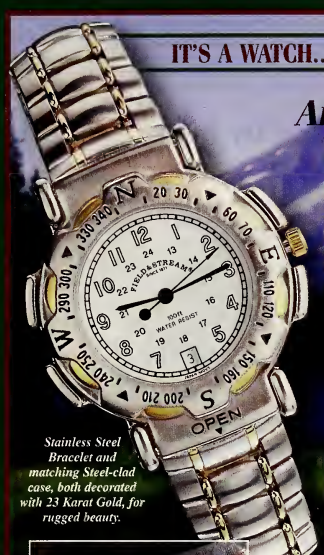

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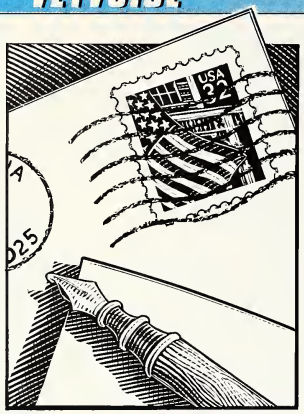

Thanks, Private Ryan

I BELIEVED myself to be a courageous man. But after experiencing "Saving Private Ryan," I feel it is my duty to write to all of you. I studied military history in college. I have always had a deep interest in the military's traditions, history and its battles. I was never a soldier myself, and one of the biggest mistakes of my life was not dedicating myself to our nation's armed forces.

The terror, anguish, sorrow and loss I felt during and after the film was overwhelming. My heart was filled with pride knowing how courageous those men were, and I couldn't forget that my grandfather's entire unit was killed that gray summer morning on Omaha Beach.

The tears of sorrow make it difficult for me to express to you the heartfelt thanks and overwhelming pride I have in all of you. How can I make others understand how important it is to never forget what you sacrificed for all of us? We must remember that our freedom has been paid for by the blood and deaths of our veterans.

You can rest assured that I am eternally grateful for the struggles you have taken part in and the monumental sacrifices you have made.

James S. Bowers
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Compliments

COMPLIMENTS on the September issue. FDR's legacy was good but flawed as he rode in on the coattails of Hoover who was blamed for the Depression. A man named Brownell in the Hoover administration designed the WPA as a means to get money moving. FDR was able to get it implemented.

Bill Hewson
Ontario, Calif.

One Small Step

I FOUND it interesting that Audrey Stubbart ("A Remarkable Life," September) believes man walking on the moon "was a great event, but it didn't do mankind any good." The inventions that have spun off from the space programs are unbelievable. The spirit of America soared after that first moon walk. Young people became energized to get involved in furthering the future of this proud nation.

Patt Germann
Madison, S.D.

Sucker Punch

IN the September issue, "The Games We Play" obviously was written by someone not proud enough to use a byline. I wouldn't either, especially with the poor choice of the "Thrilla in Manila." Why highlight Muhammed Ali, an American who refused to serve his country?

Joseph H. Marshall
El Paso, Texas

Love or Lust

YOU really like to rub veterans' noses into your love affair of the late John Wayne. Now you have his photo on the cover of your magazine. All I can think of when I see his photo is all the great Americans who served in WWII while he declined to serve. What next? Is the Legion planning to honor Wayne posthumously with a medal?

Norman Graber
San Marcos, Calif.

Father of Cool

THE statement that "when Willis H. Carrier designed a system for air conditioning in 1902," is not accurate ("Turning On, Tuning In, Booting Up," September). In 1844, Dr. John Gorrie of Apalachicola, Fla., invented mechanical air conditioning for his small hospital, and Alfred Wolf designed the air conditioning system for the New York Stock Exchange in 1901.

Carrier's invention of the psychometric chart and development of the formulae are still in use today. He was a

Working For Old Glory

Past National Vice Commander Doris Gross of Washington (left in photo) recently presented Rep. Linda Smith with a certificate of appreciation from the Citizens Flag Alliance, Inc.. Smith was among 314 House members who voted for the flag-protection amendment in June 1997.

At press time, the Senate was expected to vote on the proposed amendment, **Senate Joint Resolution 40**.

Members of the Legion-founded CFA, Inc., an umbrella group consisting of more than 130 businesses, civic, veterans and fraternal organizations, have been working overtime since 1994 for passage of a constitutional amendment that would allow Congress to pass legislation prohibiting the physical desecration of the Flag of the United States. Several lawmakers have been recognized by the CFA for their support.

7:30AM

7:30PM

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remarkable engineer, but not the "father of air conditioning."

Charles E. Langbein Jr.
Winter Haven, Fla.

Pollution Alert

ONE of the special blessings of the Legion is our advocacy for the well-being of the American family. A case in point is September's "The School of Virtue" by Michael Novak. America faces one of its greatest crises: blatant immorality is destroying the moral strength and our American way of life. Present-day rhetoric resonates widespread environmental pollution while ignoring the "pollution of the minds" that is infecting even our youngest children.

"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people," according to Proverbs 14:34. Such wisdom is compelling in our day. America should heed that counsel.

Chuck Underwood
Waukee, Iowa

Where's Harry?

YOUR overview of the American Century was, at best, shallow. I cannot conceive of any publication presenting the U.S. 20th century which fails to include Harry Truman (except for a reference to his hometown on p. 76).

James A. Grimsley Jr.
Charleston, S.C.

Unmentioned

CONGRATULATIONS on your September 1998 issue. Might I point out, however, that between page 26 and 28 you went from 1969 to 1977, with items concerning an incident with an eastern U.S. Senator, and continued with the Muppet Show.

No place in that entire article, nor in the entire magazine, except one letter to the editor, did I see a single mention of the Vietnam Era War.

If that event, which left hundreds of thousands of casualties, and over 52,000 killed or missing in action, not to mention POWs and MIAs whose whereabouts are still unknown, was not worthy of mention, then a great part of the history of this century has been neglected.

I know you have printed articles in the past, but I find it difficult to conceive that absolutely no acknowledgment was made in a six-page recap of the 20th Century.

Dennis F. Shrewsbury
Plymouth, Mich.

Well Done

I SIMPLY had to write and congratulate you and your staff for an excellent September issue. It was most interesting and extremely well done in every respect. Four stars to you and your staff.

Forrest F. Crane
Cape Coral, Fla.

Passing the Butt

I CAN'T understand why there hasn't been more media exposure on the tobacco issue. America should be made aware of its elected officials' pathetic attitude towards veterans. I was 17 when I enlisted and totally unaware of the hazards of tobacco. As a nonsmoker, I had to police the area after a march while the smokers were given a 10- or 15-minute break to light up. I quickly began smoking.

How many others were taught to smoke under similar conditions? How many, like me, are now suffering from heart problems and excessive lung scarring?

Charles P. Glosser
Interlaken, N.Y.

Smokescreen

I DO not understand The American Legion diatribe concerning the Senate vote to eliminate "benefits for veterans for compensation and medical care for conditions linked to tobacco addictions they incurred while in the military." How does anyone know that the addiction occurred while in the military?

Many of us started smoking while in the military and eventually quit. If I became a drunk since the booze was cheap, should the taxpayers be required to pay for this addiction? We are all responsible for our individual weaknesses. The legislation that originally provided this funding to the VA was bad from the get-go. Surely we can find better legislation to campaign for.

Frederick D. Foy
Bluff City, Tenn.

Overlooked VA

THE August article, "Dying Light," was very informative. The accompanying article, "Looking for Help," should have listed the VA hospital as a resource for the visually impaired.

Call your local VA hospital or Southeastern Blind Rehabilitation Center for more information: 700 South 19th St., Birmingham, AL 35233, **(205) 933-8101**.

Jack Limback
Mount Dora, Fla.

Rekindled Light

MORE than seven years ago, I was diagnosed with macular degeneration. My search for answers led me to an alternative therapist who suggested chelation therapy. After just 10 treatments, I started to see better. When I saw my ophthalmologist again, he was amazed my vision had returned to nor-

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THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE welcomes letters concerning articles that appear in the publication. Be sure to include your hometown and a daytime phone number for verification. All letters are subject to editing. Send your opinions to:

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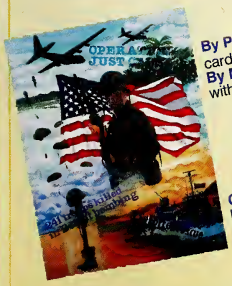

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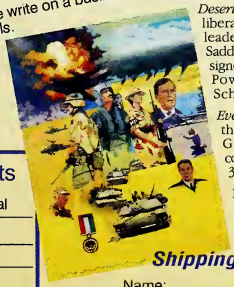

Desert Storm celebrates America's role during the liberation of Kuwait. The montage portrays the leaders, soldiers, and equipment which halted Saddam Hussein's invasion. 250 prints have been signed by President George Bush, General Colin Powell, Ret., and General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Ret., and Michael Hagel.

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VETVOICE

mal. However, he did not give chelation therapy credit as the cure.

I continue to receive maintenance treatments. Chelation therapy has helped me and others with macular degeneration.

Merrill I. Lipton, M.D.
Belton, Texas

Star-Spangled Smithsonian

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE mounted a huge cry against the Smithsonian Museum for its Enola Gay exhibit. Now that same museum is trying to restore the deteriorating, original Star-Spangled Banner that flew atop Fort McHenry, where is our equally loud support for the Smithsonian's positive work?

James L. Persoon
Grand Haven, Mich.

Absent Allegiance

I RECENTLY attended my grandson's high school graduation. I couldn't believe what I didn't see or hear. Some 30 graduates had joined the armed forces; The American Legion Post presented several scholarships; yet "God" was never mentioned during the entire ceremony.

There was no Pledge of Allegiance or flag on display. Are all schools downgrading "God and country" through silence?

Joseph Foisy
Brushton, N.Y.

Second Amendment

I UNDERSTAND and support The American Legion's position on a flag amendment. However, my main concern is the Second Amendment. As I read each issue of the magazine, I find it disheartening that our organization has not taken a firm stand against gun control.

Let us not forget what Hitler said in 1934: "Now that guns are banned from our streets, this will be a much safer country." This is what we are hearing from our politicians today. I am all for flag protection, but when we lose our right to bear arms, our flag will end up just another rag.

Richard Szymkowiak
New Kensington, Pa. □

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BEST SMOKE OF THE DAY

THE LESSONS FROM 'PVT. RYAN'

All Americans can share a common appreciation for Veterans Day.

National Commander "Butch" Miller

JOHN E. SIMON

OLD GLORY gently waves in the breeze before the image fades into a scene aboard the heaving landing craft as it approaches the beachhead. Men and boys in battle dress, mashed together like sardines, wear grim masks foreshadowing what is to come. Some mouth silent prayers to their God.

"Check your gear! Keep low and keep moving!" someone yells, as the craft's door plops into the pounding surf. The gate to Hell opens, and the troops are greeted by a hurricane of machine-gun fire and a deadly rain of mortar and artillery. Welcome to Normandy, June 6, 1944.

This opening scene of Steven Spielberg's movie, "Saving Private Ryan," is graphic and gripping. The camera swings in rapid, jerky movements as if to show the battle through the eyes of a GI. The pinging of ricocheting bullets and explosions mix with the desperate voices of the wounded and dying.

War, as combat veterans will tell you, is a surrealistic roller-coaster ride of mayhem mixed in with lengthy waits. It's gore, blood, fear and tears with boredom and an occasional dose of defensive dark humor. War is ugly and inglorious—but good people rise in the heat of battle and perform gloriously. War is not a movie.

Much has been written and discussed about "Saving Private Ryan." And while it might not convey the full fury of war, this epic depiction has caused many to reflect upon some fundamental truths about the spirit of the men and women who have worn the uniform of our country: Courage under fire. Doing the dirty work that results when diplomacy fails. Commitment to the mission. Keeping the faith with the buddy next to you. And never removed from a GI's mind are the loved ones back home and the life left behind.

In war and in peace, Americans always have answered the call, often placed in situations rife with clichés and ironies. It's the flatlander farm boy transplanted in a dense jungle, the fast-talking Brooklynite who stands a silent watch on the bridge, the pacifist-turned-grunt, the girl from next door who flies jets or tends to the sick and wounded, and the "Holy Joe from Kokomo"—the one guy in the barracks everyone expected to wash out of basic training—who becomes the honor graduate.

I believe it's fair to say a large number of those who have not served appreciate what veterans mean to this country. Consider a letter recently received at American Legion National Headquarters from Jack McGrogan of San Jose, Calif.:

"... I just want to take a moment to say 'thank you' to American veterans. I have a good job, a good wife, four lovely kids, a nice house, two cars and I live in a nice neighborhood. But none of this would have been possible if you hadn't heeded the call and done your duty to fight for our freedom.

"At the time, you may not have known exactly what you were doing or why you were doing it. But the course of history was changed by you and your fellow service members. Thousands made the ultimate sacrifice for our country and our way of life.

"I guess that leaves it to people like me to try and live a good life, appreciate the great things we have in this country and remember vets. I will try to keep this in mind whenever I feel like I have real problems. What we Americans have is special and it ain't free. To all veterans, I wish them good health and peace to you and your families."

And this, too, is my wish for those who have served or are now serving on the eve of Veterans Day 1998. For veterans know all too well that freedom is an expensive thing—and it's a price we've always been willing to pay. □

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The speakers in conventional radios cannot produce lifelike bass, which is essential for great sound.

Only the Wave radio with acoustic waveguide speaker technology produces high-quality sound with full, rich bass.

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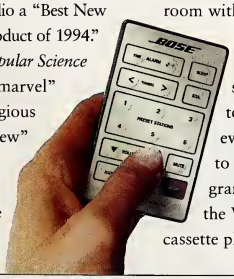

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Should Public Schools Be English-Only?

Rep. Wally Herger (R-California)

YES Immersion is a highly effective means of learning any language. Children are particularly adept at picking up a new language—unless, it appears, they are enrolled in a bilingual education course run by the bilingual education bureaucracy. Then, these kids fail miserably.

That's right. The data are in. Children who are enrolled in bilingual education programs in our public schools languish in those courses for up to five years. The California State Board of Education reports that just 5 percent of Hispanic students are successfully moved into English language instruction each year. This is a staggering 95 percent failure rate.

This monumental disaster is not that surprising when you realize that in the typical "bilingual" education class students receive roughly 30 minutes of instruction in English while the rest of the day is spent speaking their native tongue. These students then typically go home to a family of non-English speaking parents and siblings. Under these circumstances, there is *no* pressure or incentive to learn English.

This is a tragedy. No student can reach his or her full potential in our society if they cannot communicate in the common language of our nation. Yet, the bilingual education lobby is digging in its heels to save "their" program.

Regrettably, the bilingual education lobby has resorted to inappropriate emotional arguments to defend the status quo. Anyone who points out the flaws and inadequacies of the current system risks being labeled a "racist" or an "immigrant basher." While it might make effective politics, it does not alter the brutal findings of every major report issued in the last decade on this topic. While facts can be hard, they demonstrate that bilingual education is not working. This problem will not go away just because it is an unpleasant one.

Another hard fact is that immigrant parents want their children to learn English as quick as possible. A 1996 nationwide poll by the Center of Equal Opportunity showed 81 percent of Hispanic parents wanted their children taught in English. A March 1998 California Field Poll revealed that 61 percent of Hispanics support **Proposition 227**, which would end the bilingual program and create an "English immersion" program for non-English speaking children. □

Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-Arizona)

NO My constituents' views, and those of many others, have led me to the conclusion that there is a need for us to establish a common-sense language policy in this country. **HR 123**, which passed in the House in the 104th Congress and has been reintroduced in the 105th Congress, does just that.

It would establish a policy that meets the changing needs of a multilingual population without burdening anyone. And that's why I voted in support of **HR 123** in 1996 and am a co-sponsor of this legislation.

HR 123 would give us the ability to proactively approach language issues by involving all citizens and their elected representatives in deciding what services will be provided in other languages. No doubt there is wasteful spending resulting from irresponsible and duplicative printing of government documents in multiple languages. There must be checks in place to prevent this sort of practice from occurring as a result of an arbitrary decision by a government bureaucrat.

We must continue to support quality bilingual education programs for children and adults so that they can learn English quickly. We live in a society dependent on rapid and accurate communication; our goal for all citizens, foreign-born as well as native born, must be proficiency in the spoken and written English word. While Congress must continue to aggressively oversee federal dollars going into bilingual education to ensure that the funds are being used to teach English instead of widening the language gap, I do not believe the time has come to throw away this program designed to teach people to speak English.

Another side of this is that most Americans are woefully uneducated about other cultures and languages. In this increasingly global economy, it is incumbent upon Americans to learn the languages and cultures of our trading partners if we are going to compete effectively.

If you look at what is happening around the globe, in countries such as Bosnia, where cultural, racial and language-related differences have led to civil war, it reminds us how important it is to have some basic, unifying elements in our national culture. English has done that in the past, and it should continue to serve as a unifying force in this country. □

Your Opinions Count, Too.

Senators and representatives are interested in constituent viewpoints. You may express your views by writing The Honorable (name), U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510, or The Honorable (name), House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515. You may call the U.S. Senate at (202) 224-3121; the House at (202) 225-3121.

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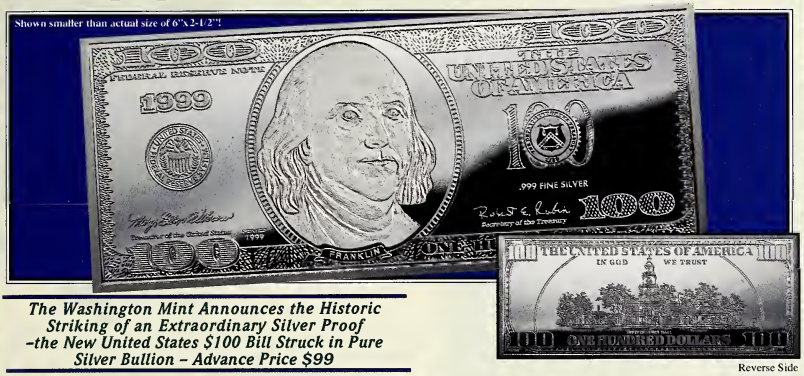

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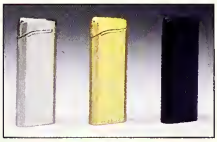

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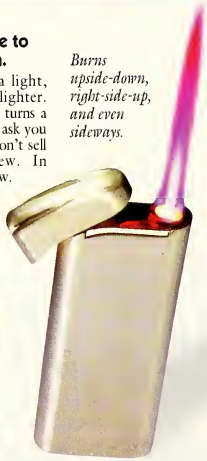

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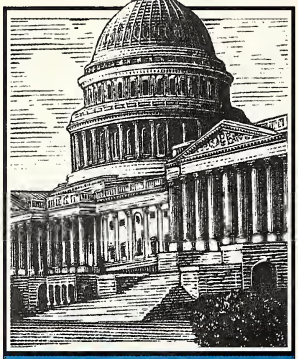

By Cliff Kincaid

Courting Terror

REP. Jim Saxton of New Jersey calls it a case of the U.S. government siding with terrorists. The government says it's a case of maintaining diplomatic leverage.

They're talking about the Justice Department's intervention in *Flatow v. Islamic Republic of Iran*. Alisa Flatow was a 20-year-old American student studying in Israel who was killed on a bus attacked by a suicide bomber.

A 1998 U.S. federal trial pinned the bombing on Iran, which was ordered to pay her family $247 million in damages. Iran boycotted the proceeding.

The trial featured disclosure of what Flatow family attorney Steven Perles called a "terrorism line item" in the Iranian national budget. Harry Brandon, former deputy assistant director of the FBI for Counterterrorism, and Dr. Patrick Clawson of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy testified that the regime dedicates $75 million a year to terrorism.

But when the Flatow family tried to collect by seizing Iranian assets in Washington, D.C., Justice Department lawyers moved in, "defending the legal interests of Iran rather than the surviving families of terrorist victims," Saxton says. "If Iran wants to defend its assets here in the United States, let them send their own lawyers to court."

About TWA 800...

IT could rival the JFK assassination in terms of lingering doubts. What blew TWA 800 out of the sky off Long Island more than two years ago? Rep. John J. Duncan of Tennessee, chairman of the House aviation subcommittee, is under mounting pressure to hold a full-blown hearing to resolve some mysteries.

While flatly rejecting conspiracy theories about missiles downing the plane, a member of his subcommittee, Rep. James A. Traficant Jr. of Ohio, has issued an 18-page report that raises several questions: Why were certain vessels and aircraft in the proximity of the flight not publicly identified? Why was eyewitness testimony suppressed? And why were certain laboratory test results held back?

Also calling for a congressional investigation is Dr. Vernon Grose, a former member of the National Transportation Safety Board who previously supported the government theory that a center wing tank explosion brought the plane down. Grose now expresses concern about the secret findings and tells THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE he is troubled by photographs of the wreckage showing a large indentation just in front of the center wing tank.

Such damage could have been caused when the plane hit the water, he says, but it is also consistent with an explosion outside the plane.

...and Pan Am 103

THIS December marks the 10th anniversary of the Pan Am 103 bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland. The crime was blamed on two Libyans, whose release for trial in the United States or Britain has been a condition of lifting U.N. economic and travel restrictions on Libya. Now, the Libyans might go free and oil could start flowing from Libya to the West.

Daniel Cohen, whose 20-year-old daughter Theodora was one of 180 Americans who died in the explosion, is outraged. He calls Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi "a terrible little man on a lake of oil" and the U.S. response a "policy of appeasement."

First, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak visited Libya, a "humanitarian visit" to Gadhafi, who was in the hospital after a hip injury. Then, the United States agreed to Libyan demands to prosecute the accused terrorists in a third country.

"If Libya holds on long enough, we blink," Cohen tells THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE. "The last superpower has been bested by a dictator."

What accounts for the policy change? Ten years is a long time to wait for justice, he says, and some people are discouraged and want closure to the case. Plus, he says, "there's a tremendous amount of money to be made from Libyan oil."

But is it worth the price? "These are people who kill kids," he says of the Libyans. And through appeasement, "We make it easier for terrorists to kill Americans."

War on CNN

DESPITE an apology and retraction, CNN hasn't heard the last about its bogus report about nerve gas used against America's Vietnam vets. "The grass-roots veterans' campaign against CNN is one of the largest and most successful to date in which citizens angered by a powerful institution have used the Internet to organize their response," says Salon Magazine. Surveys show that CNN's audience declined significantly after the scandal.

But the campaign against CNN continues. One web site in particular (**www.greenberet.com**) has announced a "Declaration of War" against CNN and urges boycotts of sponsors.

Meanwhile, some World War II veterans are taking aim at CNN's coverage of the former Yugoslavia, where the Serbs have typically been depicted as the bad guys. In a national newspaper ad, retired Air Force Maj. Richard L. Felman, says he was one of over 500 American pilots shot down over Nazi-occupied Yugoslavia in World War II and rescued by Serbs. He says the Bosnian Muslims, now considered the good guys, were "turning our airmen over to the enemy" during the war. The ad blames CNN reporter Christiane Amanpour for coverage that prompted U.S.-NATO intervention in the Bosnian civil war. □

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THAT PERFECT SEASON

BANNER YEAR The Edwardsville, Ill., team, sponsored by Post 199, celebrates after winning the American Legion Baseball World Series, capping a perfect 40–0 season

JIM GURNLAN

Players from the Edwardsville, Ill., Legion Baseball team were missing something—and found it in Las Vegas.

By David Boyd

THE high school baseball team in Edwardsville, Ill., had reason to be proud after winning all 40 of its games and a state championship. But something was missing—namely national recognition.

A *USA Today* poll had only ranked the team sixth, despite its unbeaten record. Now, Edwardsville can boast of a national championship. Edwardsville Post 199, behind the hitting of Chad Opel and the pitching of twins Ben and James Hutton, won The American Legion Baseball World Series, taking a 9-4 victory over Post 100 of Cherryville, N.C., in the final game at Cashman Field in Las Vegas.

"After high school was over and we went 40-0 I thought, 'Geez, it doesn't get any better than this," said Opel, named the American Legion World Series Player of the Year. "The Legion gave us a chance to prove that wrong. Now we are national champions."

The 72nd World Series championship game was a battle between two strong Legion Baseball programs. The coaches—Ken Schaake for Edwardsville and Bobby Reynolds for Cherryville—are both graduates of Legion ball. Schaake's father had been the team's business manager in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Reynolds had played on the 1981 Cherryville team that reached the regional tournament.

With ESPN taping the game and a pre-game ceremony featuring a fly-over by two Air Force jets from nearby Nellis Air Force Base, the energy level at Cashman Field was soaring despite the 100-degree temperature for the 7 p.m. start.

Schaake picked James Hutton (9-2) to start the championship game while Reynolds chose Brian Sigmon, a 16-year-old. Staff ace Ralph Roberts (15-1) had thrown 82 pitches in five innings during the previous night's 5-4 semifinal victory over Danville, Calif.

Both pitchers quickly settled into a groove. Through five innings, Cherryville led, 2-1, on the basis of a second-inning home run by Wesley Anthony and a fourth-inning hit by Brad Lane that scored Bryson Willis. Edwardsville countered with a run in the fifth on Kory Kuba's two-out double.

Schaake wasn't worried about the quiet bats, not with a team that set a tournament record with a .396 batting average.

"I had a feeling that we would hit the pitcher, only because of the way they looked the first time, the first inning or so," Schaake said. "They just kept after it, and when it was time to hit, even though we were down a little bit, they came back and they just continued to go with the

David Boyd is the media coordinator for The American Legion Baseball World Series. He works for the Memphis Commercial Appeal in Tennessee.

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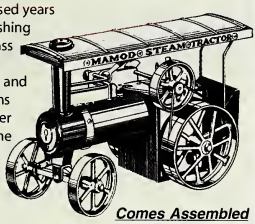

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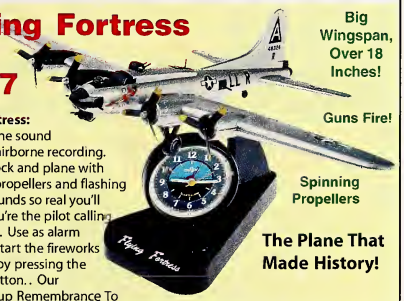

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"The whole team responded tonight. It was a team win, it's always a team win."

—James Hutton, Edwardsville pitcher

pitch, hit the line drives and take the extra base."

Post 199 was indeed starting to figure out Sigmon, and with two outs in the sixth it finally countered the hard-throwing righthander. Catcher Todd Haug doubled to deep right-center and leftfielder Nick Seibert followed with an RBI single up the middle just out of shortstop Wes Hudson's reach. Bubba Turner added an RBI single to give Edwardsville its first lead, 3-2.

Edwardsville added three more runs in the seventh to break the game open. Matt Bogle led off the inning with a single through the left side, bringing an end to Sigmon's night of pitching. Reynolds brought in Roberts to try to keep the game close.

Roberts walked Kuba before retiring Dave Crouthers on a flyout. But, with two outs Tim Hansel singled up the middle scoring Bogle. Opel followed with a single to right to drive in Kuba. Hansel then scored on Roberts' wild pitch and Edwardsville increased the lead to 6-2. Cherryville rallied with two runs in the bottom of the seventh to close the gap to 6-4. Lane singled and scored on an error, and Roberts walked and later scored on Justin Sanford's sacrifice fly.

The North Carolina team had the tying run on second but James Hutton struck out Sigmon. Edwardsville added another run in the eighth on Chris McCoy's solo home run and scored a pair in the ninth for the final margin of 9-4.

Hutton pitched 7⅓ innings and allowed nine hits, two earned runs, and three walks while hurling seven strikeouts. Brother Ben, who pitched a complete game in Edwards-ville's 9-3 semifinal win over State College, Pa., closed the game with 1⅔ innings of shutout ball to earn the save.

"James came out and really pitched a great game," Schaake said. He pitched out of a couple of impossible jams. This is probably one of the greatest feelings of my life to experience what I have experienced with these kids the last couple of weeks in the tournament.

"We knew this team (Cherryville) was a real good team," Schaake continued. "If we let them get any type of a rally going, we were in trouble. I have seen them hit the whole tournament. They hit good pitching and they hit good pitching real hard. We tried to talk to our pitchers and tell them to keep it off balance, move the ball around. And we told our hitters to go up there swinging. They are a class group of kids. They work hard."

The hard work earned the Edwardsville players and coaches a trip to two Major League World Series games this fall and shortstop Opel a trip to the 1999 Baseball Hall of Fame ceremonies in Cooperstown, N.Y., for winning the George W. Rulon American Legion Player of the Year honors.

Opel also earned a $3,000 scholarship from Buick. Of Opel, Schaake remarked, "He's one of the catalysts. He's the one kids look to for leadership."

Opel's .632 batting average is the second highest ever in National tournament history. Doug Palmer of New Ulm, Minn., batted .659 in 1978.

For Edwardsville (41-7) the victory capped off a tremendous season, with 81 wins in high school and Legion Baseball play.

Many of the Edwardsville players felt the American Legion Baseball World Series was a perfect place to showcase the talent of the team. And in a town where winning is not a sure thing, Edwardsville took a gamble and found its national title. □

THE WINNER'S CIRCLE

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Ralph Roberts
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$2,000 scholarship from Gatorade

Louisville Slugger Award
(best batting average)
.632 by Chad Opel
Edwardsville, Ill.,

Rawlings Big Stick Award
(most total bases)
34 by Ralph Roberts
Cherryville, N.C.

Click Cowger RBI Award
(most RBI)
25 by Chris Wright
State College, Penna.

Bob Feller Strikeout Award
(most strikeouts)
41 by Ralph Roberts
Cherryville N.C.

Jack Williams Memorial Leadership Award
(Winning manager and coaches)
Ken Schaake, Manager; Steve Haug, coach; Keith Opel, coach; Mike Schaake, coach.

LET IT SLIDE In a preliminary game, a player for State College, Pa., goes belly-down into second as a Cherryville, N.C. fielder stretches for the throwout.

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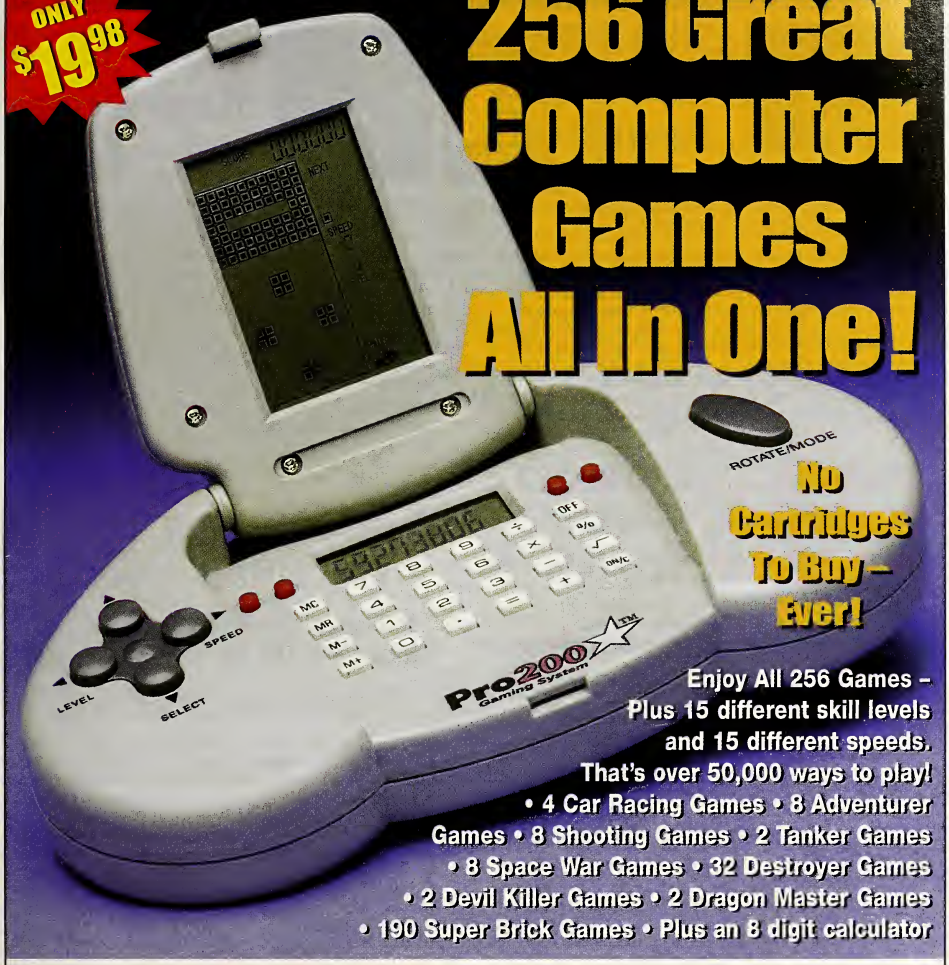

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Just Ordinary Boys

In about the time it takes to play a baseball game, a legend was born and a hero made...his example inspired a generation.

By John Perry

STEPPING off the train in Paris on the cool, crisp morning of April 7, 1919, Sgt. Alvin C. York found his way to the Hotel Gabriel without any trouble. He had made several visits to the city since the Armistice five months before, and was familiar enough with the streets to set off from the massive, ornate railway station with a sense of confidence.

York had come to represent his fellow enlisted soldiers at the founding of The American Legion, organized and chartered on that day to honor veterans by helping provide for them and their families. During the ceremony in the elegant hotel ballroom, the sergeant found himself standing with a host of international dignitaries. York was at ease among them, proudly wearing the Distinguished Service Cross that had been presented to him by Gen. John "Blackjack" Pershing himself (and which would have a Medal of Honor beside it within two weeks).

A casual observer might have been astonished to learn that less than two years before, this humble hero had been a farmer and blacksmith in an isolated Tennessee hamlet 12 miles from the nearest paved road. Farmer York was a pacifist, a lay preacher, engaged to be married and destined for a life of happy obscurity. Not only had he never ridden a train, he had never even seen one. (In 1928, 10 years after York's military service, the nearest passenger train stop was in Oneida, Tenn., nearly 40 miles away.)

A little red post card changed all that, and began a chapter that would rewrite the history of his life and the lives of many others. The

John Perry and Alvin York share the distinction of having been drafted. His recent book, "Sgt. York: His Life, Legend & Legacy," is the first complete biography of this famous Tennessee soldier.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

LONG SHOT A 14-inch railway-mobile cannon fires in support of an Allied attack in 1918.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

IRON FIST A unit of tanks forms up for an advance.

card was delivered by horseback to the post office in Pall Mall, Tenn., and ordered Alvin York to report for service in the U. S. Army. Soon after, York boarded a train for boot camp, then sailed for Europe to fight the Germans in France.

Early on the morning of Oct. 8, 1918, York's platoon was on a desperate mission. The battalion assault on German lines had been halted by withering machine-gun fire. To advance, American soldiers had to charge down a hillside into a valley, making them sitting ducks for Spandau emplacements on the opposite slope. York's unit was ordered to work its way around the line, distract the gunners and relieve the main assault force.

Running through thick underbrush, the platoon literally stumbled upon German reserves eating breakfast. The ensuing fight attracted the machine-gunners, who turned their weapons on the flanking Americans with deadly effect. In minutes many in the platoon were killed or wounded, including every noncom; the ranking soldier left was then-Corporal Alvin York.

While others tended to casualties and guarded the Germans they had taken prisoner, York began picking off the machine-gunners one by one. After he killed more than 20, others began to surrender. York formed up his command of seven privates and marched the prisoners back to American lines, collecting more enemy prisoners as he went. When he arrived at headquarters, the division commander, Gen. Julian R. Lindsey, sent for him. "Well, York," he said, "I hear you have captured the whole damn German army."

"No, sir," York answered. "I only got 132."

From the time the Allied advance began on the morning of Oct. 8 until York

DECORATED Sgt. York was a corporal when he rallied seven survivors of his platoon, killed 20 German machine-gunners and captured 132 other enemy soldiers.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

11TH HOUR Doughboys celebrate the news that an armistice has ended the fighting.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Just Ordinary Boys

returned with his captives, three hours and 15 minutes had passed. In about the time it takes to play a baseball game, a legend was born and a hero made. His example inspired a generation, and his legacy still touches us. All because of a little red post card.

York's battlefield experience brought him a lifetime of honors and acclaim. But war didn't make Alvin York a hero; it only brought his heroism to the surface. War didn't define this Tennessee soldier, but it stripped away every non-essential element to the point where, in the blood and fear and exhaustion of battle, he knew what defined him because he didn't have the strength to hold onto anything else: faith, family, freedom.

Millions of other doughboys shared that same fear, saw the same gruesome destruction. It forced them to look inside themselves and decide what was most important—the core beliefs they lived for, and which they never took for granted again when they finally, thank God, got home.

The effect of the war on returning vets was as individual to them as their fingerprints. Some came back with a lifetime of tall tales to entertain the grandchildren with every Christmas. Others found their memories transformed into nightmares and nervous breakdowns. Military discipline brought out the leader in some men and the laggard in others. Yet in spite of their uniqueness, every soldier's experience forged a common bond with all the rest. Theirs was a shared moment that was the stuff of history. Famous or not, hero or not, they were there.

> ***'We have always fought for that right (to be free). If we have stopped, then we owe the memory of George Washington an apology, for he wasted his time at Valley Forge.'***
>
> **Alvin York**

Surviving members of York's platoon resumed typically anonymous lives back home: truck driver, farmer, bartender, night watchman, junk dealer, factory worker and teacher. Others did not fare so well, and their readjustment became a new battlefield. The world they returned to was being transformed.

Within a year after demobilization, women had gotten the vote, Prohibition was in full swing, and radio networks and intercity highways were on the horizon. The war was old news and the Roaring 20s were in the spotlight. It was easy to forget about the doughboys, and many Americans did.

Speaking at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on Memorial Day 1941, with Nazis on the rampage and a strong non-interventionist movement slowing America's aid to Europe, Sgt. York reminded a nationwide radio audience that a soldier's battle is never won. "By our victory in the last war, we won a lease on liberty, not a deed to it," he said. "England is fighting for the right of her people to be free. We have always fought for that right. If we have stopped, then we owe the memory of George Washington an apology, for he wasted his time at Valley Forge."

The least we can do now, on the 80th anniversary of the Armistice, is listen with grateful hearts to the recalled deeds of these ordinary boys. We honor their sacrifice as a most precious legacy. □

CRUSADER Alvin York addresses the crowd at a Memorial Day celebration in Tullahoma, Tenn., in the early 1950s

COURTESY OF THE YORK FAMILY

The Good Sergeant

GOSPEL music dominates local radio waves, hemmed into the valleys and hollows by the surrounding Tennessee mountains where Alvin York lived when he wasn't in France fighting Germans—or on the road trying to raise money for a good cause.

People in and around his home hamlet of Pall Mall, Tenn., still believe in propriety and duty. A funeral procession encountered on a twisting, narrow ribbon of highway up the side of a mountain requires respect as traffic stops on the thinly defined roadside until the grieving roll past. "If you hadn't stopped in Fentress County, you might have been shot," jokes Doug Young, superintendent of the Alvin C. York Agricultural Institute in the county seat of Jamestown.

The institute, which has become one of the top performing high schools in Tennessee, is the most notable of the projects "The Sergeant" (as he continues to be remembered) pursued in the years following World War I. A founder of The American Legion in Paris, York shunned offers for endorsements and careers that would have taken the war hero permanently out of The Valley of the Three Forks of the Wolf and made him wealthy. Instead, he applied his celebrity in fund-raising campaigns to improve the lives of his neighbors.

The former conscientious objector was deeply involved in his communi-

The Good Sergeant

ty and country, and served as head of the Fentress County draft board during World War II. A man with a third-grade education, York worked tirelessly for more and better schools and highways in his home country long before Washington's "War on Poverty" focused on the region.

"He traveled to every state and just about every city in the country," says Andrew Jackson York, 68-year-old son of the World War I Medal of Honor recipient. "We never did think of him as a hero and he never did think of himself that way."

Andrew York is a Tennessee park ranger and gives tours of the home his father received as a gift from the people of the state after his return from war. It is the same home in which Andrew York grew up. In August, more than 12,000 cars stopped at the York home site, operated by the State of Tennessee along the York Highway, U.S. 127.

"You sure have something to be proud of," a tourist tells Andrew York, whose father died in 1964, 10 years after suffering a paralyzing stroke. His mother, Gracie York, died in 1984.

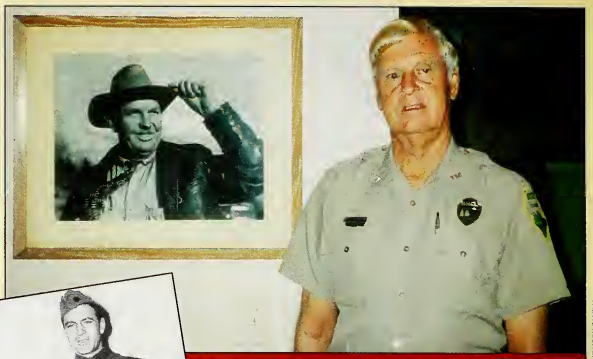
"I'm glad the place was closed for 11 years before it opened up," the ranger says as he points toward York's bedroom. "Sometimes it's still hard. I was born in that room."

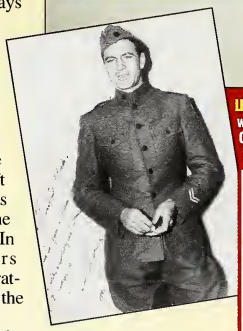
Life at the house was a whirlwind, even after illness struck. "He laid in bed until 1964, still people would come by to see him—and he'd tell them to come on back, Andrew York remembers. "I don't see how he stood it. If you showed up here around dinnertime, they'd invite you in to eat."

Gracie York was accustomed to fixing meals for dozens or more on a moment's notice. "She'd order pinto beans by the hundred-pound bag," Andrew York says.

Many took advantage of York's generosity, which he extended to a fault. People on the streets of Jamestown would tell Sgt. York about their financial problems, his son says, and he'd wind up agreeing to stand behind their notes—which he often wound up paying.

"He was a busy person," says 90-year-old local historian Wilma Pinckley, whose late husband was a close friend and physician for Sgt. York. "The sergeant was an investor, always trying to strike it rich. But he used all his money for the institute and the building he wanted to make into a Bible school."





LEGACY Andrew York stands next to a portrait of his father in the home where Sgt. York raised him. The World War I hero rests in a Fentress County cemetery (below) in an area that was the only place he wanted to live. Gary Cooper was spied smoking as "Sgt. York" and sent York an apology on an autographed picture (left).

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE YORK FAMILY

The 1941 film, "Sergeant York," provided more fame and money for the real Sgt. York. He had personally approved the casting of Gary Cooper in the title role but apparently raised objections when he spotted the actor smoking a cigarette while in costume. Alvin York, who was very devout in his religious faith, did not want anyone drinking or smoking and portraying him or members of his family at the same time, his son says. Cooper sent a photograph with an apology to York. His performance in the film won him an Academy Award for Best Actor.

Sgt. York built a bible school near his home with the money he garnered from selling the rights to his life story to Hollywood. The school, however, still stands empty after rarely being used. Never an accomplished businessman, aging and bedridden, he found himself owing a debt to the Internal Revenue Service for the money earned from the movie. More than 20 American Legion Posts in Tennessee organized a drive to pay the debt, which was eventually settled with the IRS for $25,000 in 1961.

To this day, the school in Jamestown that York started and toured the country raising money to support remains his perpetual monument. Test scores of students there rank above the national average, even though many of the students face challenges linked to poverty —often cited as a reason for failure at other schools.

"Sixty-six percent of our students eat free or reduce priced meals," Young says. "We're poor folks."

Alvin York wanted to do something for the boys and girls who lived on top of this mountain, the superintendent says, and he succeeded. "Everything we do here, we tie into his philosophy."

Andrew York says his father poured his whole heart into the institute. "It's hard to explain how much it meant to him, really." He also remembers what it was like being a student in a high school named for his father, the most famous man in Fentress County and, for a time, the State of Tennessee.

"You got picked on a lot," the park ranger says. "I got into a lot of fights for him."

—David Penticuff

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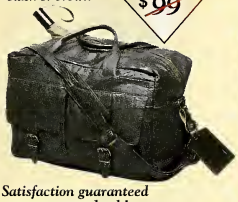

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A Free Rifle And Boat

Our senior veterans remember: Remaking the world was tough, even when they were young

By David Pentcuff

THOSE remaining don't look like warriors anymore. They have aged to the point of mostly being honored for surviving a long life and for the number of times great appears before grandpa or grandma and their last name.

But there was a day, four-score years ago, when they remade the planet. Principalities were shed, new world orders fell into place and much of the course of the exhilarating and violent century was etched in place by their great and distant war.

World War I forever changed maps and the administration of battle as it carved bloody trenches across the landscape of France and Belgium. Found among the earthworks one day in 1918 was Charles Fackler, an American who, with a bullet in his gut, tried not to breathe the French country air heavy with mustard gas and chlorine.

He was only partially successful.

"I didn't have any gas mask," the 98-year-old member of Post 576 in Allen-

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

ON BREAK Doughboys found Red Cross coffee a treat.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

OVER THERE Doughboys of the 2nd Battalion, 329th Infantry, assume the "on guard" position in bayonet training, Oct. 5, 1918, during their first week in France.

Ride

town, Pa., remembers. "I really didn't recover."

For the next 80 years Fackler, who lives in an assisted-living complex in Allentown, wouldn't be able to run for distance or swim with his peers because the German gases burned away the lining of his lungs. "I can feel the effects all the time," he says, his voice rising in pitch while trying to talk and draw in air simultaneously, "even to this day."

A medic came upon Fackler and carried the former chocolate factory employee to relative safety. "I was a fighter," says Fackler, who served as a sergeant in the Army's 28th Division and returned with two Purple Hearts. "It was kill or be killed."

In June 1918 Fackler's 28th Division, a.k.a. "Iron Division," included about 24,000 troops, mostly from the Pennsylvania National Guard. Before Nov. 11, about 14,000 of the division would become casualties in actions that carry names like Champagne-Marne, Aisne-Marne and Meuse-Argonne. Across the whole war, researchers figure that by the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, when the armistice took effect, 116,000 Americans were dead or dying from all causes. In the Battle of Belleau Wood alone, U.S. casualties have been calculated at 5,200 per square mile. Civilians and soldiers alike perished from a virulent flu that swept Europe at the end of the war and added to the torment.

Fackler knew many who departed never to again see home. "I left with 250 men," he says. "Only seven of us made it back to Harrisburg."

COURTESY OF LOUIS WATSON

THREADS OF HISTORY Louis Watson enlisted when the woolen mill where he worked went on strike. He went from producer to user of uniforms.

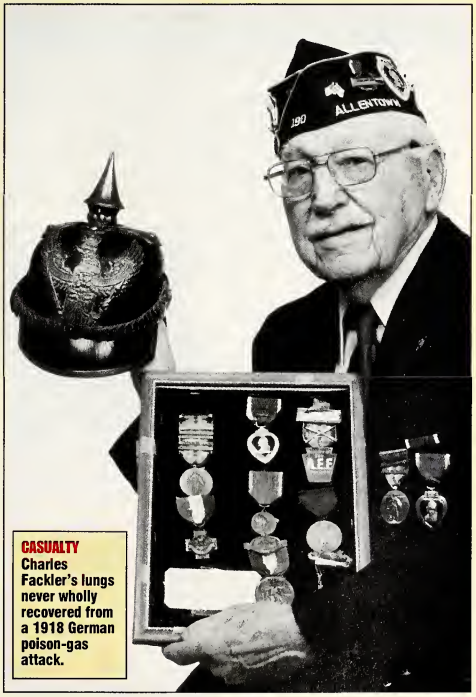
Twentieth-century warfare now abruptly included tanks, airplanes and flame throwers as well as poison gas. All had proven most effective at killing during the first three years of conflict, but unable to win the stalemate for anyone. Then the United States, with its resources and fresh young men, enlisted in the Allied effort. An end was finally made to the war, victoriously, within 18 months.

"I joined because a young fellow would get a rifle and trip overseas in a boat," Fackler says. "I worked at the Hershey Chocolate Co. It wasn't that I wanted to fight and die; it was the adventure."

BUDDIES Fackler (left) poses with a comrade. Only he and six men would return to Harrisburg from his outfit.

'We were trained to accept it as it was, you saw your buddies right next to you killed.'

Charles Fackler



COURTESY OF CHARLES FACKLER

CASUALTY Charles Fackler's lungs never wholly recovered from a 1918 German poison-gas attack.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

FORCING THE FRONT Gunners of the 2nd Infantry Division support an advance in 1918 against German entrenchments.

Sacrifices of those who reshaped the world during the Great War might stand as immortal, but their bodies do not. "We are going fast," says 99-year-old Louis Watson, National Commander of The Veterans of World War I, USA, Inc. "Most are over 100 years old. You don't know when you are going to go yourself."

Watson, a member of American Legion Post 120 in Daytona Beach, Fla., estimates only about 3,300 U.S. veterans of World War I are living. He served in the Navy, joining at Fairhaven, Mass., in 1918 because he found the naval recruiting station before he found the National Guard office. "I was working in a woolen mill making Army and Navy uniforms," he says. "I decided to enlist when the mill went on strike. I wore one of the uniforms I'd helped make."

Hostilities ended before the ship to which Watson was assigned, the *USS Arcadia*, left port. She still made the trip to Europe with Watson aboard to help fetch the American Expeditionary Force home.

"I was on a list to go to gunnery school," he says. But fighting ended before he went into training and his mission changed to one of scrubbing down the steamer's coal bunkers, painting them white and making them livable for returning doughboys.

The *Arcadia* made five transatlantic voyages hauling troops home, including passage for some members of the famous "Harlem Hellfighters" of New York's 169th Infantry Regiment. The black soldiers who made up that unit were highly decorated and exceeded by five days the length of front-line service of any U.S. regiment. But in a segregated Army, black soldiers often wound up doing the hard work of service battalions outside the action.

PHOTO BY DAVID PENTOLOFF

OPPORTUNITY Leonard Marbury went to war to escape rural poverty and to become his own man.

Leonard Marbury

Leonard Marbury remembers what it was like to be a black soldier the first time the whole world went to war.

"I wanted to be my own man," he says.

About noontime, Taps blew softly through steady rain across the grounds of the Dayton VA Medical Center where Marbury makes his home. The sound rose up from the adjacent National Cemetery between old trees and center buildings, a mishmash of architectural styles denoting various construction periods in the 131-year history of the hospital. Another veteran was being laid to rest over the next hill. If someone had raised the window behind his head in the nursing home day room, even with 98-year-old ears, Marbury could have heard the bugler's notes. But the television was too loud. Bob Barker and the studio audience of "The Price Is Right" drowned most everything out.

The native of Dadeville, Ala., said he enlisted in 1917 to escape relentless rural poverty. His mother worked as a cook, ironed clothes and picked cotton. "That was the only way she had to make a living...They told me I was going to get a job in Newport News, Va," he says. "... I was in the 310th Service Battalion, U.S. Army. A buck private."

He made only the smallest of movements as he spoke.

"I was in Belgium, Holland and France. We built soldier camps. We loaded the ships and unloaded the ships. They sent us overseas, paid us $30 a month and board and a place to stay. We had it tough, but under the circumstances it was a great experience."

His battalion was charged with taking food and other supplies to the men on the front lines. "My back was like a freight train," Marbury says.

Given no weapons but being close to the fighting sometimes made him feel like "a sitting duck."

And racism followed him over there. "Some of the American whites, they wouldn't fight with the colored...We really weren't allowed to mix and socialize," he says. "If they found you were mixing and mingling, they'd run you like a rabbit."

The end of the war didn't change that.

"They had a big celebration," he says of the day of the armistice. "We didn't celebrate together. That was what we were supposed to do. We got a whole lot of dirty deals," he says.

Marbury has good memories, too. "We were going all over the world. We were doing our duty and serving our country...All-in-all I'm glad. We did what the law wanted. The worst part for me was they didn't want us. They didn't recognize or appreciate all we'd done."

Bob Walsh

Home was the place everyone wanted to go, says 103-year-old Bob Walsh, a wagoner with the 88th Infantry Division. Wagoner is a rank which no longer exists. It belonged to the cavalry. Walsh's job was to ferry officers around, usually by motorcycle and sidecar.

"I rode a motorcycle on the worst of all days," he says. "The weather was very bad over there at that time. I drove

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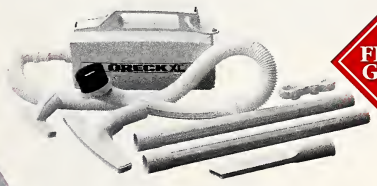

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THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

ARGONNE Late September, 1918: Men of the 77th Division wait for the order to advance.

all the officers up to the lower end of the Western Front. In our division, maybe a dozen men were killed in the few little encounters we had."

Walsh, a member of Post 542 in St. Paul, Minn., had been at the front only about two months when the war ended. "It was quite a surprise to us," he says of the armistice. "We heard some rumors that it was going on."

His diary for Nov. 11, 1918 shows the news was almost an afterthought: "Fair, 60 above. Up at 6:45... Chased around town for a while then went up to the officers YMCA and got Capt. Nelson. Dinner at noon. Took Lt. Healy out at 1:30, went to Minorville and Bernecourt. Back here at 4 p.m. War is over today. Lots of talk about it. Supper at 5:30."

Fackler couldn't recall a lot of deep discussion or reasoning about the war among soldiers. "We were trained to accept it as it was," he says. "You saw your buddies right next to you killed."

But, as he had predicted while still a teen in Pennsylvania, there was plenty of adventure. The Army took away his sergeant stripes, he says, after French police caught him breaking off a rusted piece of the Eiffel Tower—a planned souvenir for home.

"They would let you go on a pass. We went to Paris," Marbury says of breaks taken from his labor in service to the men at the front. "It was like a vacation."

Walsh had his own adventures in the City of Light when he and his buddies encountered some friendly French women. "Sure had a great time," he recorded in his diary before returning to Minnesota. "Mon Cheree all night."

Eighty years later, they still have Paris. □

COURTESY OF A. ZION

ON THE ROAD AGAIN Assigned a sidecar-equipped motorcycle, Bob Walsh had spent two months near the front, ferrying officers around, when the war ended.

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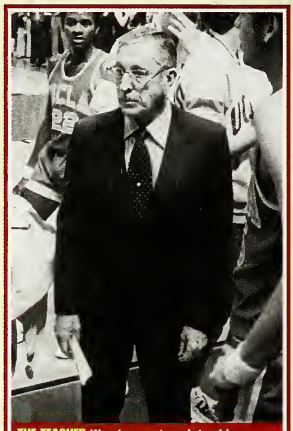
HOLDING COURT

Former UCLA coach John Wooden believed himself to be a teacher as much as a coach.

LEGENDARY UCLA basketball coach John Wooden's numbers speak for themselves—10 national championships in 12 years, seven consecutive national championships, 88-game winning streak, 38 straight NCAA tournament victories, four undefeated seasons, eight undefeated Pac-8 (Pacific Conference, now Pac-10) seasons, and the only man elected to college basketball's Hall of Fame as player (Purdue University) and coach.

Numbers, however, have never been how Wooden measures success. He built championship teams, and his demands affected his players from head to toe. Proper appearance meant hair cut to acceptable length, no beards or mustaches, dress codes at practice and while traveling, down to lessons on the proper way to put on socks and lace up shoes.

Even today, 23 years after retiring, Wooden resides at elite status in college basketball. He appears at basketball camps, serves as an inspirational speaker and is a sought-after interview during the NCAA tournament—as well as by THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE.



THE TEACHER Wooden contemplates his Bruins' next move during a timeout in a 1974 game.

WIDE WORLD

AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE: You've been called "Wizard, saint, teacher, genius, deacon, coach, and Little Man from Pepperidge Farm." Which titles would you keep, which would you leave behind?

JOHN WOODEN: I certainly don't like that "wizard" and I certainly don't like that "saint." Teacher would be enough. That's what I think a coach should be. You're trying to teach basketball.

Q. What is it about professional basketball that kept you from crossing over?

A. I never really had any interest in coaching in the NBA—too much traveling, and I don't believe the coach really is in charge. Today's star players are more in charge, and you're at their mercy in a sense. I know of cases where players have gotten the coaches fired, and I understand that. It might be easier to replace a coach in many situations than to replace one of the superstars. I don't think that's the way it should be, but that's just a fact of life.

Q. You've said that you refuse to equate success with winning, yet one of your goals was to have a perfect season, which you did four times. Is that a contradictory philosophy?

A. In a sense, yes. I think I had successful seasons when we didn't go undefeated, when we didn't win national championships. But you're judged by what you've achieved, and that's why there is the win and loss record. The only person who can truly give a valid appraisal of success is the individual himself.

Q. "Just like parsing a sentence" you broke down basketball to its basic elements. How else did you intertwine your degree in English with your coaching career?

A. You break down the fundamentals of the game according to laws of learning. You keep repeating it until things almost become automatic. From repetition you learn to be patient and not to expect too much too soon.

From teaching English, I learned the laws and applied them to coaching a sport.

Q. You once said that if you wanted showmanship, you'd go see the Harlem Globetrotters. How would you use your no-nonsense style to deal with a player like Dennis Rodman?

A. He wouldn't be with me. Any player would understand that before he came. There are certain things I wouldn't permit, and I'd stick to them. As time progressed, I started out with a number of rules and a few suggestions, then later I had fewer rules and more suggestions. The rules I stayed with, I was consistent with. It didn't matter if it involved the star players or someone who played very little.

Q. Looking into your crystal basketball, what changes would you like to see in the future?

A. I'd like to see them experiment with the three-point line, moving to the distance of the international rules; I'd like to see them raising the basket a little bit. Those would be interesting.

I'd like to see them just call the rules according to the rules that are there. Call traveling when it's traveling; call three seconds when it's three seconds. They're not doing that now. Any person who goes in to make a fancy dunk can take twice as many steps as allowed and they won't call it. I think the dunk has hurt basketball. I think it has taken away from team play. It has made showmen out of players. It is showmanship, and people love it. They'll never do away with it, but I think it would make a better game and you'd have better players. □

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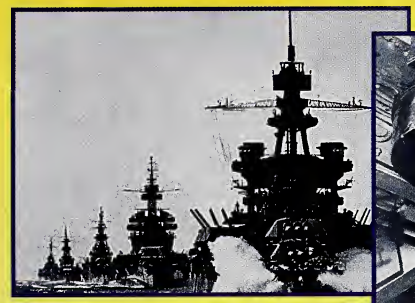

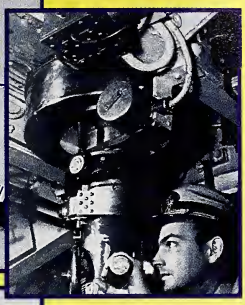

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The Allied Turning Point

The turning point came in a naval battle off Newfoundland in May of 1943. The U.S. Navy and its allies, by using their new counter methods, finally were able to protect their convoys. In fact, during the month of May we sank 43 German U-boats, greatly eliminating the Wolf Pack's threat. The U.S. Navy now had free rein over the ocean, a necessity in order for the convoys to carry supplies that were desperately needed for the war effort. This exciting World War II series shows you actual war footage, giving you a real sense of what was at stake. It takes you through the full story of W.W. II by sea. Brings you in touch with the major dramatic events from the beginning of W.W. II to the final U.S. and Allied Victories At Sea. Music was written by Richard Rodgers.

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THE Unfinished Business OF WORLD WAR II

A revised design is approved for a memorial to honor the Americans who won the "big one."

WORLD WAR II ruined Albert Fickel's three-day pass.

A fireman aboard *USS Pennsylvania* (BB-38), Fickel had "finagled a pass" ashore that was set to start the minute he came off his 4-to-8 watch aboard ship that Sunday morning, Dec. 7, 1941. The future member of American Legion Post 39 in Taylor, Texas, had big plans to celebrate his 21st birthday.

"I came off my watch at No. 3 engine room, changed clothes, squared my hat and started to go topside," Fickel recalls. He heard explosions and figured sailors were exploding dynamite again, clearing coral reef from the harbor. The Pennsylvania, flagship of the Pacific fleet, was on keel blocks undergoing routine maintenance in No. 1 drydock when Japanese bombs began falling at 7:55 a.m.

A hit killed 26 Marines aboard Pennsylvania, but the battleship dodged destruction that day to rejoin the fleet in March 1942, and amass battle distinctions in 13 Pacific operations. Fickel retired a chief machinist's mate in 1959, but he never forgot fallen friends such as his buddy, David McMasters, who was killed at Pearl Harbor on the USS Arizona. It rests where it sank off Ford Island; Arizona lost 80 percent of its complement, 1,177 Americans dead.

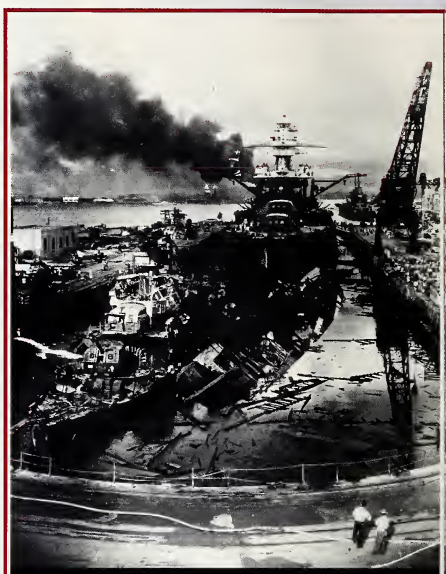
More than a half-century later, Americans are shaping a lasting remembrance to the generation that fought and won World War II on battlefronts, behind the lines and on the homefront. In July, the National Capital Planning Commission, by an 8-2 vote, approved architect Friedrich St. Florian's revised design for a National World War II Memorial to be built on the Mall in Washington, D.C. It's taken nearly as long to have the design OK'd as it took U.S. forces to whip Hitler and Tojo.

After site dedication on Veterans Day 1995, the project mired down in a design controversy. The memorial site is on the east end of the Reflecting Pool between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. Critics of St. Florian's original design for the memorial complained it blocked the vista between the U.S. Capitol and the Lincoln Memorial. American Battle Monument Commission officials asked St. Florian to revise his plans and submitted the memorial's new look in May to Washington's Commission of Fine Arts. With both commissions' endorsement secure, officials hope to break ground by Veterans Day in 2000.

Meanwhile, more than $28 million in gifts from 150,000 individuals and dozens of veterans' groups, corporations and foundations has been raised toward the $100 million needed to complete the memorial. Former Senate Majority Leader and World War II Army veteran Bob Dole is co-chairman of the fund-raising campaign, working with Frederick W. Smith, the Marine veteran who is president and CEO of Federal Express.

Speaking in Indianapolis on May 22 at the dedication of Indiana's World War II Memorial, Dole invoked the past in support of the National World War II Memorial.

"It is important that we remember the voices and deeds of those young men and women who liberated whole continents from tyranny and who willingly died for a future they would never see," said Dole, a member of Post 99 in his hometown of Russell, Kan. "In World War II, the American spirit of hope and decency saved the world," Dole said, adding that completing the national memorial is, "the unfinished business of



NATIONAL ARCHIVES

FIRST BLOOD The Dec. 7, 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor plunged America into World War II. USS Pennsylvania (top), Pacific fleet flagship, sustained minor damage.

THE FUTURE OF THE PAST Groundbreaking on the World War II memorial, designed by Friedrich St. Florian, is scheduled for 2000.

WWII MEMORIAL COMMISSION

ANOTHER MISSION Bob Dole, formerly Senate majority leader and a Wold War II vet, is a co-chairman of the fund-raising effort.

JOHN E. SIMON

the Second World War."

The American Legion, by resolution, fully supports the campaign and urges its members, Posts, Districts and Departments to support this perpetual tribute to the World War II generation. All members of The American Legion family are urged to send their contributions toward the National World War II Memorial to: The American Legion, P.O. Box 781138, Indianapolis, IN 46278-8138.

Dole, the 1996 Republican candidate for president, said the memorial is not only an important reminder that free people can prevail against tyranny, but its prominent location on the Mall in the nation's capital will serve as a potent reminder to future generations.

"In peaceful times war memorials may seem out of place and out of fashion," Dole said to a crowd of several hundred gathered for the Hoosier memorial's dedication. "But they are appropriate now because we are at peace. Memorials such as this remind us how our peace came to be. They prod us to remember that what is unthinkable today was once routinely thought and may be again, unless we are vigilant."

Dole suffered severe wounds while serving with the 10th Mountain Division in Italy in 1945. For his personal sacrifice, he was awarded two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star.

Another voice from the World War II generation, Army veteran and Legionnaire Herman G. Harrington, represented his peers last spring before the Commission of Fine Arts in Washington. Harrington, a member of Post 1231 in Rensselaer, N.Y., and chairman of the National Internal Affairs Commission, conveyed his own sense of urgency for completing the memorial.

"With each day, about 1,000 World War II veterans answer the final call," Harrington told commission members. "Less than half of the 16 million men and women who served in uniform during the war are still with us. I'd like to see this monument built in time for them to enjoy. Mr. Chairman, give us the green light. My generation's got one more job to do!"

In voting, "yes," commission members acknowledged that America's World War II generation did its job, a monumental task generations to come will marvel to consider. Dole recalls that as young soldiers, he and his buddies were too caught up in the everyday struggle to survive to see World War II as the epic it was. They didn't hear the call of history, he said, but the voice of friends, voices that were confident and fearful, and all too frequently, "silenced in a moment, in a place far from home." He said the World War II Memorial will teach future generations of Americans to heed the voice of those who fought, served and died.

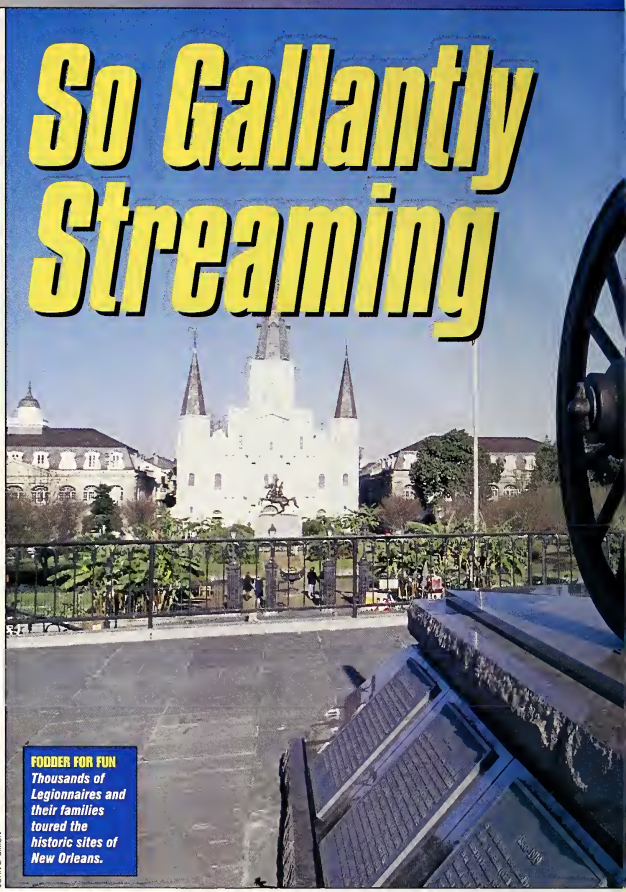
Those sentiments are echoed by National Commander "Butch" Miller. "We need a reminder that just men and women can prevail, and the memorial planned for the Mall accomplishes this. World War II is one of those rare moments in history that looks even larger from a distance."

—Anthony Miller

UNIPHOTO

So Gallantly Streaming

Legionnaires rally 'round Old Glory, dodge the rain and conduct business at New Orleans.



JOHN E. SIMON

FODDER FOR FUN *Thousands of Legionnaires and their families toured the historic sites of New Orleans.*

NATIONAL Commander Anthony G. Jordan's year was all about change. At every stop in his globe-trotting turn at the helm of the world's largest veterans' organization, Jordan told Legionnaires they had to change the way they do business at their Post.

Jordan's message didn't mean Legionnaires should tinker with success. No, he said, innovative change must strengthen the tradition of service to veterans and their families so that Persian Gulf-era and other, younger Legionnaires can inherit that legacy in the 21st century.

In looking ahead, Jordan invoked the past, mentioning November's 80th anniversary of the end of World War I. He noted the Founders of The American Legion were passionate to get things done for veterans, widows and orphans. They were determined to preserve core American values and worked to ensure the men and women of the armed forces went to war prepared.

"They weren't afraid to call for change—that's what the original GI Bill was all about: changing the covenant between veterans and the government they served," Jordan said, pausing to remove his red cap and placing it on the lectern. He paused again, his emotions bubbling near the surface, then told delegates: "You changed America for the better the past year. I'm proud of you. I'm honored to have worn your National Commander's cap. I have always felt this cap belonged to you more than it belonged to me."

For Jordan, the symbolic end to his busy year came during the opening plenary session, Tuesday, Sept. 8, in the New Orleans Hilton Riverside Hotel. In his report to National Convention delegates, he summed up by calling for positive change in how The American Legion conducts its programs, treats its members and attracts new generations to carry on for those who won the 20th century's major conflicts.

Jordan introduced a list of distinguished speakers that included Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright; Joint

JOE STUTEVILLE

YEAR TO REMEMBER *PNC E. Roy Stone Jr., S.C., presents National Commander Jordan with a plaque, honoring his year at the helm of the Legion and his service to God and country.*

SHOW YOUR COLORS! *Indiana's Speedway Post 500 honor guard prepares to post the colors of the nation and the flag of Legion's National Commander.*

JOE STUTEVILLE

COOL COUPLE *Anthony Jordan and his wife, Claudette, greet guests at the Commander's Banquet.*

Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Henry H. Shelton; Secretary of Veterans' Affairs Togo D. West Jr.; retired Maj. Gen. Patrick Brady, chairman of the Citizens Flag Alliance; and historian Stephen E. Ambrose, best-selling author of "Undaunted Courage," "D-Day, June 6, 1944: The Climactic Battle of World War II" and "Citizen Soldiers."

Legionnaires were swept up in a deluge of activities; the event is part business, part fun and all about renewing friendships and meeting new comrades in service to God and country. But Legionnaires, Auxiliary members and the Sons of The American Legion coped with another deluge in New Orleans.

Tropical Storm Earl was scheduled

JOE STUTEVILLE

WINNING WORDS *Kirk Mitchell, a reporter with the Mesa Tribune (Ariz.), is presented with The American Legion's Fourth Estate Award by Jordan and National PR Commission Chairman Bob Morrill.*

SPIRIT OF NORMANDY AWARD *The Commander displays the special award for Steven Spielberg, director of the blockbuster, "Saving Private Ryan."*

JOE STUTEVILLE

"GOOD GUY" *The Most Rev. Philip M. Hannan, archbishop of New Orleans, receives the prestigious James V. Day Award from the Past Department Commanders Club. Jordan, Al Robotti of New Jersey and Dick Pedro of New York present the plaque.*

DARLEEN OLIVO

PATRIOTIC PARTNERS *Department of Virginia officers are in the spotlight as they are awarded the William Randolph Hearst Americanism Trophy. Beaumont Enterprise Vice President Aubrey Webb (third from right) presents the trophy, which recognizes a Department for excellence in promoting citizenship activities.*

to roar ashore the afternoon of Wednesday, Sept. 2, to greet early convention arrivals. Fortunately, the storm skirted New Orleans. Rain lingered into Sunday, Sept. 6, as contingents began to form on Decatur Street in the French Quarter for the National Convention Parade. It was a washout before it started. The torrential rainfall by itself did not force the cancellation, says Jeffrey L. Olson, chairman of the National Convention Commission.

"I called the National Weather Service at the airport, and they reported a large Level Three storm with significant electrical activity," he recalls. Olson asked for that in English: "Does that mean lightning?" he wanted to know. Why, yes it did. Olson called National Commander Jordan and recommended scrubbing the parade, a first (organizers didn't schedule a parade in Phoenix in 1991 due to intense heat; other parades, during World War II, were abbreviated affairs). The rain, though relentless, was tolerable. The danger from lightning was not, concluded organizers, unable to argue with safety considerations.

THE SOGGY marchers, color guard units and band members headed back to their hotels for impromptu concerts and friendly milling around. Delegates also exercised their right to be heard in Washington, specifically with their senators on Capitol Hill.

Hundreds of American Legion family members stopped by the Citizens Flag Alliance booth and sent e-mail messages to their U.S. Senators in sup-

DARLEEN OLIVO

MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT
SECRETARY OF STATE

"In this century, we have prevailed with our allies in two global wars... Now, we confront new dangers at a time of great turbulence and complexity."

DARLEEN OLIVO

MARY LOU RETTON
GOLD MEDAL GYMNAST

The Olympic Gold medalist in gymnastics now champions the cause of the Children's Miracle Network. David Pierson, Covington, La., joins Retton and tells conventioneers how the network helped him after an accident.

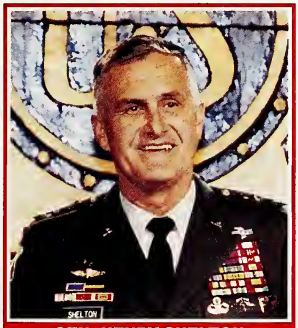
port of **Senate Joint Resolution 40**, the flag-protection bill. With the vote imminent, flag-backers figured the time had come for a full-court press in favor of returning to the people the decision whether or not Old Glory deserved protection under law. E-mail visitors were armed with the roll call records of their senators, their e-mail addresses and office phone numbers; many Legionnaires followed up their e-mails with pro-**SJR 40** phone calls and post cards.

While Legionnaires sent messages of support, National Vice Commanders and volunteers handled phones in a "war room" in the National Headquarters staff office. In July, the CFA sent 100 postcards to every one of the nearly 15,000 Legion Posts for distribution to members. The members sent them to their Senators, urging them to back SJR 40. Legionnaires at Snider-Richardson Post 273 in Grand Marsh, Wis. were the first to check in. Their 30 members had mailed 95 postcards.

Before the 1989 Supreme Court decision in *Texas v. Johnson*, flag-protection laws were on the books in nearly every state. The existence of such laws didn't prevent Americans from exercising their free speech rights under the Constitution. That threat was perceived, if not invented and hammered home, by opponents of SJR 40. That category includes the American Civil Liberties Union and the American Bar Association.

Most Americans feel otherwise, as revealed by the latest poll conducted by the Gallup Organization. In its third study of the flag-protection issue since 1990, pollsters discovered the numbers are consistent on the question of protecting the flag: A majority of Americans passionately want their flag protected from physical desecration. They don't believe such laws endanger Americans' hard-won free speech rights which, incidentally, America's veterans for two centuries have fought and died to uphold. Results of the August poll of 998 adults were released at a press conference on Capitol Hill. Convention delegates watched on huge monitors.

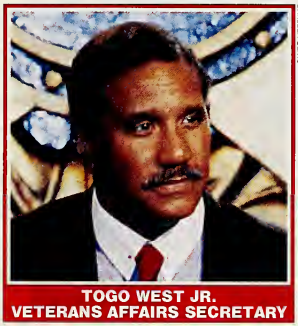
Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah and Sen. Max Cleland of Georgia, who introduced SJR 40 last February, welcomed pollsters from the Gallup Organization, as well as several Senate colleagues who support the measure. Attending



DARLEEN OLIVO

GEN. HENRY SHELTON
CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

"By helping shape international environments, we can help prevent conflicts from escalating."



DARLEEN OLIVO

TOGO WEST JR.
VETERANS AFFAIRS SECRETARY

"No eligible veteran who comes to a VA medical center for care will be turned away," pledges West, an Idaho Legionnaire.

JOE STITZWALLE

SENATOR MARY LANDRIEU
OF LOUISIANA

Though not a co-sponsor of SJR 40, the lawmaker promises Legionnaires she will vote for the amendment.

JOE STUTEVILLE

YOUTH CHAMPIONS *Kevin Sladek, Boys Nation president; Erin Plettenberg, Oratorical Contest winner; Nate Philo, Legion Baseball Player of the Year; Kelly Dove, Jr. Shooting Sports champion; and Mark Sukraw, Legion Scout of the Year, share a moment with the commander before they address convention delegates.*

were South Carolina's Strom Thurmond, Iowa's Charles Grassley, Idaho's Larry Craig and North Carolina's Lauch Faircloth. Entertainer Pat Boone was also on hand to lend his support.

"The will of the people is unquestionable: They want the U.S. Senate to send to the states a flag-protection constitutional amendment for ratification. The Gallup Poll shows three out of four Americans support an amendment that would, in effect, take the fate of Old Glory out of the hands of the courts and put it back in the hands of the American people," Jordan said after the CFA news conference.

"I'm confident that the required two-thirds majority in the Senate will respect the most important free speech of all: the voice of 'We the People' and pass **SJR 40** so that the people can decide this issue."

Gallup's Debra Christian shared Jordan's confidence and had the numbers to back up the validity of earlier polling on the flag issue. According to the survey, 76 percent of respondents favored allowing Congress authority to pass flag-protection laws, a course of action that 52 percent agreed with "strongly." Also, 75 percent believe Americans' First Amendment right to free speech is adequately protected already, while 74 percent termed flag-burning an inappropriate expression of free speech rights.

CFA supporters such as Brady believe the flag campaign is more than a fight for "letting the people decide" the issue; it's a fight for values and for the future. Adults have made up their minds one way or the other, he said, but young people who don't inherit an appreciation for America's special place in history won't care about preserving its unique symbol of unity and nationhood. Brady—a Vietnam War Medal of Honor recipient—pointed to polling indicating that one in six of those questioned, 15 percent, fear the nation's young people don't understand what the flag symbolizes to care enough to protect it.

AT TUESDAY'S opening session, Brady introduced five other Medal of Honor recipients whose actions testify to the conviction that the flag is more than, "just a piece of cloth." One by one, they stood at the lectern urging delegates to contact their senators. Walter Ehlers and George Wahlen represented the World War II generation, Ehlers from the European Theater, Wahlen from the Pacific Theater. Retired Gen. Ray Davis, a three-war veteran whose heroic action during the Korean War earned him his nation's highest award, followed.

JOE STUTEVILLE

DAD'S THE ONE *Craig Miller nominates his candidate of choice for the office of National Commander.*

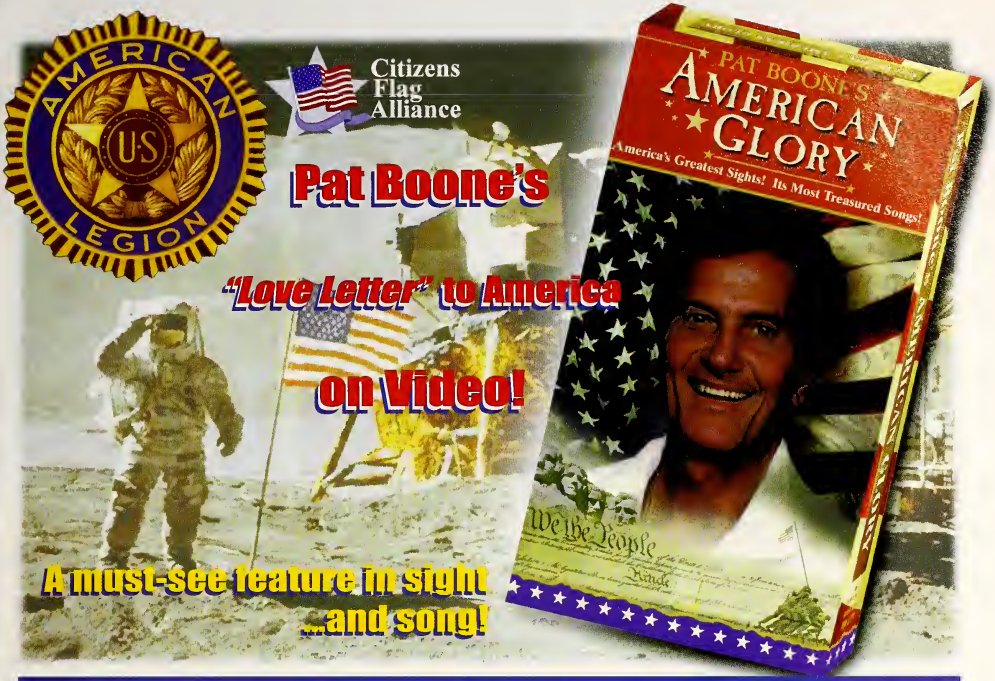
Next were Mike Fitzmaurice and retired Gen. Jim Livingston, a Georgia native who lives in New Orleans. The delegates clapped and shouted their approval of these exemplary Americans who articulated their love of country in deeds. In his remarks, Brady brought up a theme from Steven Spielberg's epic war film, "Saving Private Ryan" and tied it to the struggle over values exemplified by the flag-protection amendment.

"I think the greatest lesson of the movie was lost in the blood and gore," Brady said. "The fundamental question to ask about Private Ryan is this: Was he worthy of the sacrifices of the men who saved him?" Brady asked. Later generations of Americans must look at themselves and wonder the same thing when it comes to the U.S. Flag.

"Are we the kind of people the veterans of World War II and the veterans who came after them sacrificed their lives for? It was not the courts or the American Civil Liberties Union who gave us our freedom, veterans did, and if Private Ryan's saviors could come back today, they would be in the front line fighting to save Old Glory," Brady told applauding delegates.

Legionnaires honored the creative force behind one of 1998's most compelling films. Jordan presented the first-ever "Spirit of Normandy" award to the Oscar-winning producer/director Steven Spielberg. Spielberg, who was in Europe and couldn't attend in person, addressed delegates via videotape that included clips from "Ryan." He thanked Legionnaires for the honor, but said plaudits more properly are due the real heroes: the World War II generation.

Author Stephen E. Ambrose has devoted years of study and writing to ensuring that the World War II generation, one of the most extraordinary in U.S. history, isn't forgotten. The best-selling author of "Citizen Soldiers" and "D-Day, June 6, 1944: The Climactic Battle of World War II" lives in nearby Bay St. Louis, Miss., and serves as president of the proposed National D-Day Museum. New Orleans rates as a suitable site for the



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DARLEEN OLIVO

SOLEMN WORDS *PNC John Geiger III administers the oath of office to newly elected National Commander Harold L. "Butch" Miller, Woodbridge, Va. Miller's mother, Loretta Wiemann, looks on.*

DARLEEN OLIVO

IT'S MILLER TIME *Delegates march through the convention hall after the nominations close.*

museum because it was the base of Andy Higgins. He is the designer of the landing craft that bear his name, boats that no less an authority than Dwight D. Eisenhower credited with making the D-Day landings possible. The D-Day Museum is scheduled to open June 6, 2000, the 56th anniversary of the Normandy landings.

There was no shortage of American heroes in the convention hall, though not all were singled out for recognition. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, however, said she recognizes heroes when she sees them, calling The American Legion "one of our country's truly great organizations." Hitler's invading armies drove Albright and her parents from their native Czechoslovakia to London, where they saw uniformed Americans as liberators.

"The story of my family has been repeated in millions of variations over more than two centuries in the lives of those around the world who have been liberated or sheltered by American soldiers, empowered by American assistance or inspired by American ideals," Albright told convention delegates on Wednesday, Sept. 9.

Albright touched on pressing threats troubling American foreign policy planners. In these days of global terror, the United States makes the highest profile target, Albright said, and our failure to prepare is measured in casualty counts. She said the recent embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania represent nothing new, that the U.S. recognizes it's in an ongoing, undeclared war against international

JOE STUTEVILLE

NEW HEADGEAR *PNC Stone prepares to place the cap of National Commander on Miller, an Army veteran of the Vietnam War.*

JOE STUTEVILLE

GUIDING INFLUENCES *Miller is joined by his stepfather and mother, Ken and Loretta Wiemann (left), Wabasha, Minn. To his right are his friend, Cathy Carruthers of Virginia, and son, Craig (right), who serves on active duty with the Marines. In the back row are former Virginia NECman Roger Messier, PNC Stone and former Virginia Adjutant Wilbur Walker.*

terrorism. The new twist, she said, is the emergence of terrorist coalitions not bound to any government, that operate across national borders and have access to the latest technologies of destruction.

"Well-financed terrorist leaders such as Osama bin Laden have vowed to kill Americans worldwide," said Albright, whose own security contingent equaled that of a visiting head of state and included dogs sniffing for explosives in the Hilton Riverside convention hall.

"Their goal is to cause America to abandon its friends, allies and responsibilities. To that, I can only say, to use an old U.S. Army expression, 'Nuts!' The nation whose finest planted the flag at Iwo Jima and plunged into hell at Omaha Beach will not be intimidated."

Albright thanked The American Legion for supporting the United States strike on bin Laden's training camps in Afghanistan and a suspected chemical weapons plant in Sudan, America's response to the embassy bombings.

In addition to diplomatic efforts and resort to force as warranted, Albright said the legal systems in the United States and other nations have often proved effective against terrorists. She noted courts have brought suspected terrorists to justice in the World Trade Center bombing and the murders at the CIA headquarters in Langley, Va., and are the focus of efforts to try those responsible for the destruction of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland.

Weapons of mass destruction are a second problem for U.S. foreign policy. Regional tensions between India and Pakistan triggered a disturbing series of underground nuclear tests by both sides earlier this year. On another front, Iran is testing a new missile in its pursuit of nuclear weapons capability and North Korea recently launched an experimental missile that crossed Japanese territory on its way to splashdown in the Pacific.

Striking back at terrorism involves risks, Albright conceded, but, "...Risks are present either way. Firmness provides no guarantees, but it is far less dangerous than allowing the belief that Americans can be assaulted with impunity. As President Clinton said, our people are not expendable."

JOE STIEVALE

CHANGING OF THE GUARD *Anthony Jordan congratulates Butch Miller moments after Miller took the oath of office.*

JOINT chiefs chairman Gen. Henry H. Shelton was among comrades when he addressed Legionnaires on Wednesday, Sept. 9, and it showed.

"As a young man in North Carolina, I was aware of what veterans did for our country and communities," said Shelton. "Soldiers, sailors, Marines and Coast Guard members are carrying on your legacy, and I can assure you they are making you proud."

The chairman asked for Legionnaires' continued support on national security and readiness issues confronting a shrinking military force, one down 700,000 troops, or 40 percent, from 1989 levels. Scaling back the military in the 1990s might be an inevitable result of America's Cold War triumph over the former Soviet Union, but U.S. commitments worldwide mean 125,000 young Americans still deployed far from home. America's commitment to stability seems the lone constant in a still-dangerous world, Shelton said.

"By helping shape international environments, we can help prevent conflicts from escalating," Shelton said, citing America's pivotal role in ending the factional strife in Bosnia, at least for now. The United States' tripwire force at the 38th Parallel in Korea

DARLEEN OLIVO

MILLER-MEN *Elected to serve as National vice commanders the next year are, from left, Leo Burke, Stockton, Calif.; John Morris, Houston, Texas; Fernando "Fred" Goulart, Pawtucket, R.I.; Miller, Roger Tingler, Covington, Ga.; and Jim Gravenstein, Topeka, Kan. Profiles on these and other National officers appear on page 58.*

DARLEEN OLIVO

GAINING SUPPORT *Legionnaires check out information about the World War II Memorial planned for the Mall in Washington, D.C. The Legion fully supports the project. See related article, page 38.*

DARLEEN OLIVO

NOT FORGOTTEN *The flag-draped empty chair is a solemn reminder of our missing servicemen.*

has deterred an irrational, aggressive North Korean regime from literally "crossing the line" for 45 years.

Shelton said that while the overall quality of troops remains high, the military is finding it increasingly difficult to find good recruits in a robust economy with plenty of options for ambitious young people. For example, career military pilots are taking early outs to try their skills in the civilian airline industry, which offers lucrative salaries and attractive benefit packages.

Finally, said Shelton, America's security stands on the shoulders of young men and women willing to sacrifice all for their buddies and their country. And once they leave service, veterans with health problems related to their service who require medical care should be able to turn to the VA.

In his address to Legionnaires, VA Secretary Togo West was at pains to clear up a misconception some veterans have about the department's Patient Enrollment System. The erroneous rumor is that if veterans eligible for VA health care and service-connected disability compensation don't enroll with the VA by Oct. 1, they could lose their benefits.

Not true, West told Legionnaires. The VA developed the enrollment system to streamline its operations and improve delivery of care, not to deny care to their customers. In the first place, any veteran in the system before 1996 is already enrolled. Adds West, "No eligible veteran who comes to a Veterans' Affairs Medical Center for care will be turned away. We will enroll them then."

Under the enrollment system, veterans are grouped in seven categories by priority of care, with the first group of those veterans rated 50 percent disabled or higher. The categories continue down the rungs of eligibility until reaching the non-service connected veterans whose incomes and net worth meet guidelines set by statute.

The American Legion supports any effort that speeds delivery of medical care to veterans. But it believes its blueprint for reforming the VA, the GI Bill of Health, offers the fairest, most comprehensive approach. The VA probably agrees, since it's already incorporated reforms such as allowing dollars from third-party payers—Medicare and private insurers—into the VA system, a major component of the GI Bill of Health.

West also pointed to improvements the VA is making in women's health care and in claims processing. Speeding processing time is a constant priority, but easing delays is only half the battle, said West, the former Secretary of the Army and a

DARLEEN OLIVO

NET CRUSADE *Many conventioneers took time out from their schedules to send e-mail to their U.S. senators, urging them to support the flag-protection amendment.*

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JOE STUTEVILLE

DYNAMIC DUO *National Commander Miller joins forces with newly elected National Auxiliary President Virginia Hobbs of Kentucky. Both organizations will face new challenges and achieve successes over the coming year.*

member of Post 113, Meridian, Idaho.

"Every day of delay in processing claims for benefits is a day that veteran is denied benefits. We must work to improve not only our timeliness but our accuracy, because it does no good if we give a veteran a fast answer and that answer is wrong."

IN BETWEEN dodging raindrops and juggling business and social schedules, delegates joined in a tribute to fallen comrades at the annual Patriotic Religious Service, conducted Sunday, Sept. 6, before 3,000-plus in the grand ballroom of the New Orleans Marriott Hotel.

Led by National Chaplain the Rev. Henry Eisenhart of Pennsylvania, the tribute included the lighting of the POW-MIA candle by 1998 Boys Nation President Kevin Sladek of San Marcos, Texas.

With appropriate decorum, a wreath was presented on behalf of The American Legion by National Commander Anthony G. Jordan and National Adjutant Robert W. Spanogle. Representing The American Legion Auxiliary, National President Barbara Kranig and National Secretary Peggy Sappenfield presented a wreath, and National Commander William E. Matoska and National Adjutant Woodrow Mudge presented a wreath on behalf of the Sons of The American Legion. The Eight and Forty's LeChapeau Nationale, Reina Svacha, and La Secretaire-Cassiere Nationale, Elyline Schweitzer, also presented a wreath.

Good guys are in abundance at every convention, but not all of them are feted and fussed over the way the Past Department Commanders Club honors its recipient of the James V. Day "Good Guy" Award. The commanders and their guests jumped to their feet applauding the Most Rev. Philip M. Hannan, 85, Archbishop of New Orleans. The former paratrooper earned fame as the "Jumping Padre" as chaplain of the 82nd Airborne Division's 505th Paratroop Battalion during World War II. The award, given each year to someone who has made a significant difference in the lives of others, found a worthy recipient in Archbishop Hannan.

In addition to his service in war, Hannan accumulated a distinguished career as educator, pastor and administrator. Among his many pastoral and civic honors are a New Orleans high school which bears his name, and a hall at Catholic University. Hannan also organized Christopher Homes, Inc., a housing program for the elderly.

In his remarks, the archbishop noted that many in today's world seem confused about the concept of freedom, mistaking it for license, and don't carry with them the spiritual standard that confers a sense of responsibility. Too many, he said, use freedom in ways that injure themselves and society.

"This is what The American Legion must address," he said, adding that there could be no debate on one point. "There is no freedom to burn the flag. When that happens, freedom itself is corrupted; our freedom is degraded."

He said Americans are an inspiration to people in developing nations and those emerging from the chaos of political suppression.

"Today, a nation is not defined by boundaries but by the virtue of its people," Hannan said. "We are the only hope for the human family of the whole world...the only defenders of freedom under God."

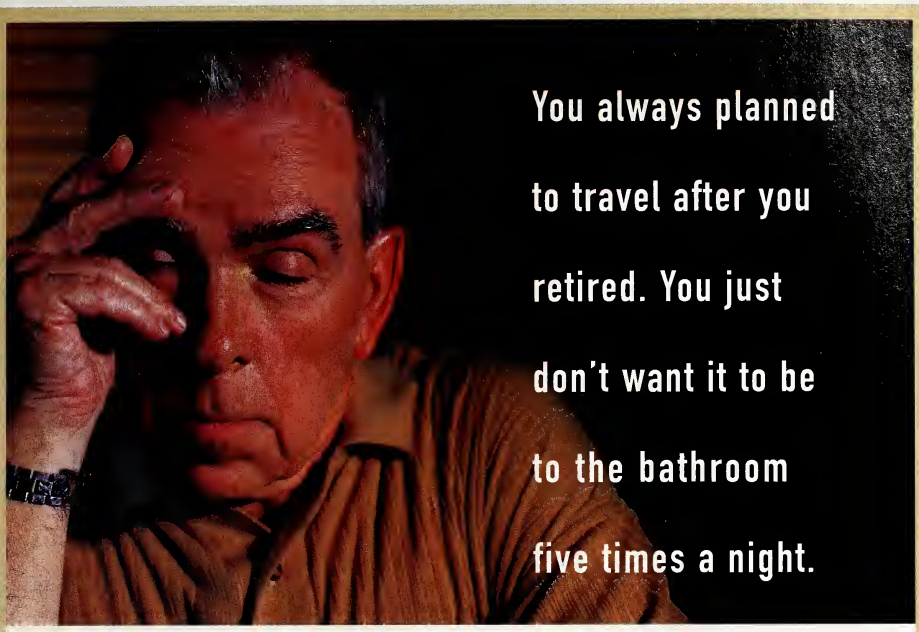
By Thursday, delegates were ready to go about the next order of business: electing a new National Commander. Delegates representing The American Legion's 2.9 million members chose Harold L. "Butch" Miller to lead the organization in 1998-99. For Tony Jordan, the whirlwind ride as National Commander was just about over as he prepared to swap the red cap of National officer for his blue cap, denoting membership in Bradford-Sortwell-Wright Post 54 in Wiscassett, Maine.

Looking out from the stage to the darkened convention hall, Jordan addressed thousands with a message directed to each Legionnaire present.

"We have done great things during my term. For 80 years, Legionnaires have done what they set out to do because we live by the same motto in our Posts that we lived by in our military units: We will not fail those with whom we serve."

Jordan succeeded in serving and making a difference on behalf of The American Legion. And once his year was up he gracefully removed the red cap of office and returned it to its rightful owners.

—Reported by Anthony Miller, Robert Imler and Layne Cameron. □



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80TH NATIONAL CONVENTION ADOPTS 137 RESOLUTIONS

Now, therefore, be it Resolved...

AMERICANISM Joseph E. Caouette Jr. (N.H.), Chairman

Res. No. 1 Support for constitutional amendment to protect the U.S. Flag.
Res. No. 313 Support for oversight of the U.S. citizenship process.
Res. No. 314 Support for efforts to combat illegal aliens.
Res. No. 315 Support for amending the Immigration and Nationality Act to allow selected non-citizen veterans to seek naturalization or admission to the U.S.
Res. No. 316 The American Legion policy on conscientious objectors.
Res. No. 317 Opposition to a constitutional convention.
Res. No. 318 Support use of English in naturalization ceremonies.
Res. No. 319 The American Legion policy on U.S. internal security.
Res. No. 320 Support for a constitutional amendment to support school prayer.
Res. No. 321 The American Legion policy on the Pledge of Allegiance.
Res. No. 322 Support for returning patriotic holidays to traditional dates.
Res. No. 323 The American Legion policy on the National Anthem.
Res. No. 324 Support for awarding the Congressional Medal of Honor to the Four Chaplains.
Res. No. 325 Support for reopening the naturalization application period for Filipino veterans.
Res. No. 326 Oppose foreign manufacture of U.S. Flags.
Res. No. 327 Support English as the official language of the U.S.
Res. No. 328 Support for immigration reform.
Res. No. 329 Support expediting naturalization of Hmong with honorable service.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH Elmer Fuhrhop (Ohio), Chairman

Res. No. 26 Oppose legalization of marijuana.
Res. No. 301 Support amending Immigration and Nationality Act to provide equal treatment in admission of all children of U.S. citizens.
Res. No. 302 Support for school nutrition program.
Res. No. 303 Support establishment of National Family Week.
Res. No. 304 Support immunization programs.
Res. No. 305 Support efforts to combat violence and vandalism in schools.
Res. No. 306 Support increased efforts to combat child pornography.
Res. No. 307 Support efforts to combat drug trafficking.
Res. No. 308 The American Legion policy on production, sale and distribution of obscene literature.
Res. No. 309 Support efforts to assist families of children with catastrophic illnesses.
Res. No. 310 Support for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

ECONOMIC Ray G. Smith (N.C.), Chairman

Res. No. 40 Support for Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) Program.
Res. No. 41 Support for Service Members Occupational Conversion and Training Act (SMOCTA).
Res. No. 46 Support for the Small Business Administration.
Res. No. 49 Support for employment of veterans in government workforce.
Res. No. 57 Support for Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to be permanently mandated and fully funded.
Res. No. 58 Support for President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities.
Res. No. 59 Support for National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI).
Res. No. 62 Support for homestead privilege being provided to veterans.
Res. No. 66 Support for preference for veterans in Housing and Urban Development.
Res. No. 70 Support for homeless shelter funding.
Res. No. 88 Support increasing the VA Home Loan Guaranty.
Res. No. 96 Maintain the Veterans Employment and Training Service.
Res. No. 99 Support for DoL Employment and Training Programs.
Res. No. 139 Support for Decennial Census in the Year 2000.
Res. No. 161 Support for home improvements and structural alterations grants.
Res. No. 162 Support for millennium stand-downs.
Res. No. 163 Support funding for homeless programs.
Res. No. 222 Oppose funding for employment services where priority is not veterans.
Res. No. 228. Support the Small Business Loan program.
Res. No 230 Support low interest loans for self-employed Guard/Reserve members.
Res. No. 232 Support re-establishment of VA home loan adjustable rate mortgages (ARMs).
Res. No. 234 Support for U.S. Savings Bond program.
Res. No. 235 Support restoring the GI Bill education reimbursement rate for correspondence courses to 90 percent.
Res. No. 244 Codify employment and training priority for veterans.
Res. No. 245 Support for civilian certification and licensing of military training.
Res. No. 266 Support for hiring preference for veterans in federal contracting.

FOREIGN RELATIONS John A. Brieden III (Texas), Chairman

Res. No. 2 The American Legion policy on support to the Republic of Korea.
Res. No. 3 Support for relations with the Republic of China.
Res. No. 10 Support for legislation to restore Missing Service Personnel Act of 1996.
Res. No. 101 Support for re-examination of Panama Canal treaties of 1977.
Res. No. 102 Support for adequate funding of war on drugs in Latin America.
Res. No. 209 Support for America's future through domestic activism.
Res. No. 210 Support, promote and protect U.S. vital national interests in principles of foreign policy.
Res. No. 212 The American Legion policy on the People's Republic of China.
Res. No. 213 Support for U.S. interests in the Panama Canal.
Res. No. 215 The American Legion policy on the United Nations.
Res. No. 216 Support for regulation of lobbying reform.
Res. No. 218 Support for priority POW/MIA actions.
Res. No. 219 The American Legion policy on World War II, Cold War and Korean War POW/MIAs.
Res. No. 220 The American Legion policy on Vietnam POW/MIAs.
Res. No. 294 The American Legion policy on Cuba.
Res. No. 295 The American Legion policy on Mexico.
Res. No. 297 The American Legion policy on Central America.
Res. No. 298 Support for the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative (EAI).

INTERNAL AFFAIRS Herman G. Harrington (N.Y.), Chairman

Res. No. 330 Support for awarding the Medal of Freedom to Harry W. Colmery.
Res. No. 331 Support for exempt status of Posts for income tax purposes.
Res. No. 332 Support for legal immunity for volunteers.
Res. No. 333 Appreciation to convention host city.
Res. No. 257 Support for Audie Murphy postage stamp.

NATIONAL SECURITY Allen L. Titus (Ind.), Chairman

Res. No. 38 Support for funding to protect American citizens abroad.
Res. No. 55 Support for domestic energy production and conservation.
Res. No. 56 The American Legion policy on nuclear energy and nuclear waste.
Res. No. 174 The American Legion policy on national security principles.
Res. No. 175 The American Legion policy on military forces in peacekeeping operations.
Res. No. 176 Support for the preservation of America's defense industrial base.
Res. No. 177 The American Legion policy on foreign investments in American defense industries.
Res. No. 178 Support for a national missile defense system.
Res. No. 179 Support for theater missile-defense systems.
Res. No. 180 Support for the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS).
Res. No. 182 Support for collegiate and high school ROTC programs.
Res. No. 183 Support oil exploration on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and coastal plain.
Res. No. 184 Support for the U.S. Air Force.
Res. No. 185 Support for the National Space Program.
Res. No. 186 Support for aerospace production and research.
Res. No. 187 Support for combating biological, cyberspace and other threats to the U.S. in the 21st century.
Res. No. 188 Support for the non-federal roles of the National Guard.
Res. No. 189 Support for building disaster resistant communities through Project Impact.
Res. No. 190 Support for combating crime in America.
Res. No. 191 Support for the second constitutional amendment.
Res. No. 192 Support for the Merchant Marine.
Res. No. 193 Support for adequate and predictable funding for the U.S. Army.
Res. No. 194 The American Legion policy on total force and viable National Guard and Reserve forces.
Res. No. 196 Support for full funding of military commissaries.
Res. No. 197 Support for Selective Service System registration program.
Res. No. 198 Support for Department of Defense health-care reform for military beneficiaries.
Res. No. 199 Support for funding concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability compensation.
Res. No. 200 Support for quality of life features for armed forces personnel, military retirees and their families.
Res. No. 202 Support for legislation for absentee military voting rights.
Res. No. 203 Support for separate gender basic training.
Res. No. 204 Support for funding concurrent receipt of military separation pay and veterans' disability compensation.
Res. No. 205 Support amendment of Uniformed Services Former Spouses Protection Act.
Res. No. 206 Support for the former ban by the Department of Defense on homosexuals serving in the armed forces.
Res. No. 207 Support for modernization of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps.
Res. No. 208 Support for full funding for the U.S. Coast Guard.
Res. No. 312 Support for burial eligibility criteria at Arlington National Cemetery.

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION
Chester F. Stellar (Ohio), Chairman

Res. No. 17 Support for veteran nursing home at Fitzsimmons Army Medical Center.
Res. No. 28 The American Legion policy on tobacco-related disabilities.
Res. No. 36 Allow concurrent payment of compensation or DIC and educational benefits to dependent children.
Res. No. 75 Seek legislation to pay accrued benefits in a pending claim up to the date the deceased veteran's claim was filed.
Res. No. 76 The American Legion policy on dependency and indemnity compensation.
Res. No. 77 Improve disability and death pension program.
Res. No. 78 The American Legion policy on the state veterans' home program.
Res. No. 79 The American Legion policy on VA compensation.
Res. No. 90 Protect disability rating after 10 years.
Res. No. 93 The American Legion policy on the National Cemetery System.
Res. No. 97 Provide full medical care for World War II veterans.
Res. No. 126 Urges Congress to exempt Veterans Affairs Medical Centers (VAMCs) from copyright infringement laws.
Res. No. 131 Enhanced Education and Training Readjustment Program for Service Persons (GI Bill).
Res. No. 132 The American Legion policy on National Service Live Insurance (DVA-NSLI).
Res. No. 133 Provide Funding for DVA construction program.
Res. No. 141 The GI Bill of Health.
Res. No. 143 Urge Congress to amend *Title 38, USC, Section 107* to recognize Filipinos as veterans.
Res. No. 144 Urge Congress to provide equal benefits to naturalized Filipino veterans.
Res. No. 145 Establishment of a new cemetery in northern California.
Res. No. 164 Support increase in claims personnel for VA.
Res. No. 165 Elimination of time limitations for filing applications for correction of military records.
Res. No. 170 The American Legion policy on Agent Orange.
Res. No. 171 The American Legion policy regarding the use of depleted uranium.
Res. No. 172 Gulf War veterans' illnesses.
Res. No. 173 The American Legion policy on long-term care.
Res. No. 237 Request Congress provide VA adequate funding for medical and prosthetic research activities.
Res. No. 253 Department of Veterans Affairs to develop a geographically adjusted means test.
Res. No. 260 Permit VA to be an authorized health care provider under all duly licensed health maintenance organizations (HMOs), preferred provider organizations (PPOs) and other similar plans.
Res. No. 273 Extend Persian Gulf War benefits to veterans who served in Israel and Turkey.
Res. No. 287 Reduce disability requirements for nonservice-connected pensions.
Res. No. 288 The American Legion policy on former POWs.
Res. No. 311 The American Legion policy on VA physicians and staffing guidelines.

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Highlights From New Orleans

IN REMEMBRANCE

DESCRIBING THE LACK of a national World War II memorial a glaring oversight, Fred Smith, chairman and president of Federal Express, told the opening session of the 80th National Convention, "We're going to do something about it!"

Speaking as co-chairman of a national fund-raising campaign with a $100-million goal, Smith vowed, "We are going to correct an oversight, and we're going to do it right."

"I feel strongly that this nation owes [all World War II veterans] an appropriate tribute. As a former Marine and a Vietnam veteran, I understand the magnitude of the sacrifices made by the service's men and women—and their families—during war and peace," Smith said.

He noted the Legion already has contributed more than $1 million of the $28 million raised so far and asked the Legion's help in raising $72 million more in two years.

After his bid to enlist the Legion, Smith was enlisted in turn in the Legion and presented a blue cap and a Life Membership in Post 1, Department of Tennessee—as well as a $5,000 contribution from Volunteer State Legionnaires.

Post 1291, Department of New York, presented Smith a check for $20,105, the result of signing up Legionnaires as charter members of the World War II Memorial Society.

COMMANDER'S BANQUET

A LITTLE SONG, a little dance, a joking juggler taking a chance.

There was no shortage of entertainment at the National Commander's Banquet for Distinguished Guests at this year's convention. Singer Marlene Ricci performed a range of songs, striking favorable chords with the audience.

When the music ended, comedian Michael Davis took center stage. The dry-witted funnyman has performed on television and some of the hottest venues in the country. Davis interspersed jokes with juggling, tossing everything from rubber balls to sharp-edged knives and meat cleavers.

JOE STUTEVILLE

IN FULL VOICE Singer Marlene Ricci performs at the Commander's Banquet.

IN TRIUMPH

AMONG THE MANY AWARDS presented during the National Convention were:

Recruiter of the Year—Clarence Short, Department of Virginia.

Frank N. Belgrano Trophy (Americanism)—Department of Florida.

William Randolph Hearst Americanism Trophy—Department of Virginia

Ralph T. O'Neil Award—Department of Wisconsin.

Chapel of the Four Chaplains Legion of Honor Bronze Medallion—National Commander Anthony G. Jordan.

Employer of the Year Awards (Economic)—Lear Seigler Services Inc., Milton, Fla.; Jak's Stripping and Refinishing, Garden City, Idaho; and Atlas Roofing Corp., Ardmore, Okla.

Garland Murphy Award (Children & Youth)—Department of Florida (Legion), Department of Ohio (Auxiliary) and Department of Ohio (Sons of The American Legion).

American Legion Fourth Estate Award—Kirk Mitchell, reporter, The Tribune, Mesa, Ariz.

William F. Lenker National Service Trophy—Department of Minnesota.

National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year—Earl P. McDonald, deputy sheriff, Belle Chasse, La.

MUTUAL HELPFULNESS

LEGION FAMILY members responded with their usual generosity and concern to an appeal from The American Legion National Emergency Fund to replenish accounts depleted by a succession of weather-related disasters.

During the convention, $98,756 flowed into the fund, according to NEF officials, and that didn't include further pledges.

The Department of Minnesota led the Legion with a $50,000 contribution, and the Department of North Dakota gathered $10,000. The Departments of Pennsylvania, Washington and New Jersey contributed $5,000 each, and the Department of Oregon added $3,500.

CIRCLE UNBROKEN

THE FOREIGN and Outlying Departments and Posts of The American Legion, or FODPAL, elected a 20-year Air Force veteran as president.

Douglas C. Haggan, a Vietnam veteran, served from January 1972 to September 1992, retiring as a technical sergeant air transport specialist at Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany. Haggan is a member of Rhein-Main Post 5, Department of France.

Other newly elected FODPAL officers include Jimmie Foster, Alaska, first vice president; Alfred S. Platt, China Post 1, second vice president ; Orland Taylor, Hawaii, third vice president; Mike Beavers, France, judge advocate; Ignacio Santiago, Philippines, historian; Sally Bennett, Mexico, chaplain; Santiago Rosario, Puerto Rico, sergeant-at-arms; Robert J. Conrad, Hawaii, secretary; Arnie Matanky, France, treasurer; and Frank Bottigliero, Illinois, breakfast chairman.

ROTC KUDOS

MOST DEPARTMENTS took part in the ROTC Awards programs in 1997-98, according to Legion officials, and nearly 10,000 medals were awarded to deserving cadets in senior and junior ROTC units nationwide.

Departments winning participation awards for the year included Alaska,

DARLEEN OLIVIO

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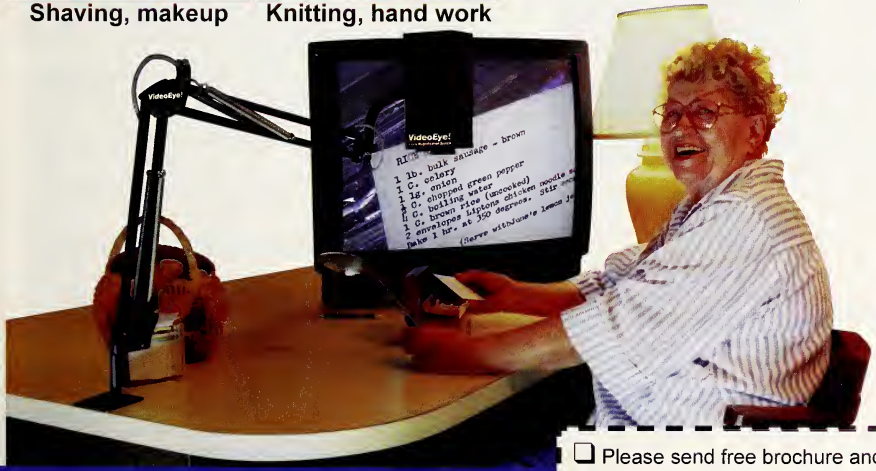

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Arkansas, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island and Tennessee. All of the Departments received letters of commendation from National Commander Anthony G. Jordan.

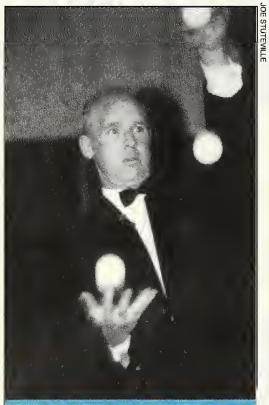
IN SCHOOL

THE NATIONAL Internal Affairs Division—for the first time—offered The American Legion Extension Institute at the 80th National Convention. Some 300 Legionnaires took advantage of the opportunity and left the four hours of instruction with pin, patch and certificate.

Director Jack Querfeld reports that students' critiques were extremely positive and that the Division plans to conduct sessions at future conventions.

"One touch that made a big impression was when we introduced the students to our Youth Champions." Querfeld reports. "Each champion made a short presentation, and then we told the students: 'These are the products of your programs.' "

"The on-site extension institute is also available to Departments," Querfeld said. "If any help is needed in setting one up, just give National Internal Affairs a call."



JOE STUTSVILLE

JUGGLE AND JOKE Comedian Michael Davis brings his dry wit and on-the-edge juggling to the Commander's Banquet.

GIFT OF LIFE

LOGISTICAL problems kept the National Convention Blood Drive from getting off the ground this year, but giving the gift of life drew, as usual, the whole-hearted, year-long support of the Departments.

Winners of the 1997-98 National Blood Donor Awards are:

Category I (Departments with 100,000 or more members), Post participation: Department of Florida; Individual participation: Department of Minnesota.

Category II (70,000 to 99,999 members), Post and individual participation: Department of Maryland.

Category III (40,000 to 69,999 members), Post and individual participation: Department of Nebraska.

Category IV (25,000 to 39,999 members), Post and individual participation: Department of Maine.

Category V (10,000 to 24,999 members), Post and individual participation: Department of Rhode Island.

Category VI (fewer than 10,000 members), Post and individual participation: Department of Hawaii.

HELLO, MARY LOU

OLYMPIC gold medal gymnast Mary Lou Retton, like The American Legion, is an active supporter of the Children's Miracle Network, which benefits 170 not-for-profit children's hospitals throughout the United States and Canada. Retton visited the convention to report to Legionnaires on CMN projects and progress.

In her Wednesday appearance, Retton told Legionnaires, "Nothing is more important than the health and happiness of our children," and said being the mother of two led to her involvement in CMN in 1991.

Her project is promoting "CMN Champions," the annual television special carried on 200 TV stations to an international audience of 102 million. The American Legion is one of 60 corporate and association sponsors whose concern for child welfare has boosted CMN's "network of caring."

In 16 years, CMN has raised more than $1.2 billion for children's hospitals, $172 million from this year's edition of its annual June telethon.

Those 172 hospitals treat children without regard for the ability of the child's family to pay.

"The great thing about CMN is that all donations stay in the local area served by the children's hospital," Retton said.

"CMN Champions" is broadcast live from Walt Disney World. The 1999 event is scheduled to begin at 9 p.m. (EDT) on Saturday, June 5, and continue through 6 p.m. Sunday, June 6.

JOE STUTSVILLE

NEWER LOOK With Past National Commander John Geiger looking on, Past National Commander Anthony G. Jordan tries on a "new" blue cap.

RUFFLES & FLOURISHES

ON THE SATURDAY the plenary sessions began, the band and color guard competitions continued a grand and colorful American Legion tradition of excellence, teamwork and discipline. The contest again put in the spotlight the best The American Legion family has to offer—and handed contest judges the toughest job in New Orleans.

The results and scores:

Senior Color Guard, Military Class (American Legion): Speedway Post 500, Indianapolis, Ind., 92.75; Henderson-Smith-Edmonds Post 86, Rockville, Md., 92.25; Road Runners Color Guard, Post 410, Lockport N.Y., 86.1.

Senior Color Guard, Military Class (open eligibility): Pure Heaven Color Guard, Ames, Iowa, 93.75; Sons of The American Legion Squadron 77, Easton, Md., 92.3; S.A.L. Squadron 148, Baltimore, Md., 91.4; Robert Wayne Auxiliary Unit 160, Roanoke, Ind., 88.45; Frank E. Booma Post 6, Portsmouth, N.H., 88; James Island Honor Guard, Post 147, James Island, S.C., 86.4; Port City American Legion Auxiliary Unit 260, Portage, Ind., 82.65.

Senior Color Guard, Open Class: Copper Knights Color Guard, Post 36, Tucson, Ariz., 94; Apple Core Color Guard, Post 370, Louisiana, Mo., 91.65; Vanguard American Legion Auxiliary Color Guard, Unit 1, Rockland, Maine, 90.85; Lady Liberties, Post 1830, Scottsville, N.Y., 89.15.

Band Composite: American Legion Band of the Tonawandas, N.Y., 96.87; Joliet, Ill., American Legion Band, Post 1080, 95.5; Greater Kansas City American Legion Band, 86.67; Oconomowoc, Wis., American Legion Band, 84; Waltham, Mass., American Legion Band, Post 156, 76.33.

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Meet Your Legion Leaders

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER

Leo P. Burke
Stockton, Calif.

Traveling around the country and volunteer service are not new for Leo Burke. As a Marine, he participated in a 45-day expedition to Greenland to test cold-weather gear. In his business life, he circled the globe with the Sam Snyder Water Follies. He is especially proud of serving as chairman of the California Veterans Board.

Burke's work with the National Foreign Relations Commission, Legislative Commission, and positions as National Executive Committeeman and Department Commander have given him the tools to succeed in his new role as National Vice Commander.

Burke, a 39-year member of Karl Ross Post 16, and his wife, Wilmena have seven children.

Burke will oversee the Western Region, which includes the 353,000 members of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Mexico, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, the Philippines, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER

Roger L. Tingler
Covington, Ga.

Roger Tingler offers this reason for joining The American Legion, "I was asked." Looking at his impressive resume suggests the question, "How many others like Tingler have not been asked?"

While with the Army 1st Infantry Division, he was awarded the Purple Heart, Bronze Star and the Air Medal. Professionally, he is employed as a textile manager with Hercules, Inc., where he has worked for the last 30 years.

His service to the Legion is highlighted with terms as Department Commander and more recently as National Chairman of Membership and Post Activities. Tingler, a 20-year Legionnaire, and his wife, Tootles are the parents of two children.

Tingler, a member of Covington Post 32, will oversee the efforts of the Southeast Region, which consists of the 467,000 Legionnaires in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER

Jim Gravenstein
Topeka, Kan.

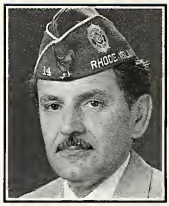
For the last four years, Jim Gravenstein has served as the National Vice Chairman on the National Security Commission. His interest in protecting America traces, in part, to his career in Navy submarines.

Gravenstein, a member of Topeka North Post 400, has delivered for the Legion as Department Commander, District Commander and Post Commander. He feels his most gratifying work has been with the National Oratorical Contest Finals. "I truly enjoy working with young people," says Gravenstein.

Gravenstein has been a member of the Legion for 24 years. He and his wife, Darlene, have five children.

Gravenstein will guide the 536,000 members of the Central Region which includes France, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER



Fernando "Fred" M. Goulart
Pawtucket, R.I.

Rhode Island Legionnaires are not losing their Department Adjutant; they—along with 2.9 million other members—are gaining a National Vice Commander.

Since leaving the Air Force, in which he served from 1969 to 1973, Fernando "Fred" M. Goulart has forged a career as an entrepreneur. He spent five years in real estate, and for the last 18 years, he has been operating the Metal Spraying Co. and Fernando's Liquor.

Goulart, a member of Cumberland Post 14, believes what he and the Legion give back to the community to be the most rewarding work. That commitment is reflected in his four years as Children and Youth Chairman.

Goulart, a 16-year member of the Legion, and his wife, Elizabeth, have three children.

He will represent the 811,000 members of the Northeast Region—Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont.

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NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER

John D. Morris
Houston, Texas

John Morris likes to view things from the top. Since serving his stint in the Army, he has spent the last 40 years working construction in Florida and Texas. He is now the owner of Southcoast Roofing Co.

Morris, a member of Griffith/Zann Post 594, believes the skills necessary for running a successful business mesh well with guiding the Legion's programs and growth. "I enjoyed my term as District Commander the most," says Morris, a Korean War veteran. "The result was two good years in working Legion programs and exceeding membership goals."

Morris has served as his Post's First Vice Commander for five terms and as Post Commander for two terms. He later worked his way up to Department Commander and National Executive Committeeman positions.

This 29-year member and his wife, Katherine, have eight children.

Morris will tend to the 660,000 Legionnaires of the Midwest Region, which includes Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma and Texas.

NATIONAL SGT.-AT-ARMS

George C. Lussier Jr.
Manassas, Va.

George Lussier Jr. agrees with the adage that knowledge is power. Educating members to the benefits of The American Legion has been his prime responsibility during his five terms as American Legion College Director. This Navy veteran of the Vietnam War has served two terms as Post Commander and three terms as Post Adjutant at Quantico/Buck Keyes Post 28.

Educating and enrolling go hand in hand in both Lussier's Legion and personal life. His wife, Roberta, has served as Auxiliary president of Unit 28; daughter Robyn is a member of Unit 28, son Charlie is a dual Legion/S.A.L. member, younger son Frank is a member of the same S.A.L. Squadron and Lussier's two granddaughters are members of Unit 28's Junior Auxiliary.

NATIONAL HISTORIAN

Robert L. Klipstine
West Milton, Ohio

I have held all offices in my Post," says Robert Klipstine, a member of Gingrich-Poince Post 487. "I have also maintained a history of my Post back to when it was chartered in 1922." From his beginnings at the Post level, he has moved his way through the ranks to end up right where he started: preserving history.

It's not surprising that Klipstine, a Marine Corps veteran of World War II, has been a Life Member for 42 years. During his tenure, he served as Aide to Past National Commander Roger Munson; National Chairman of Naval Affairs and National Security; Department Commander and CFA Co-Chairman. At home, he and his wife, Nancy, have two daughters.

His year as Aide has been his most memorable Legion experience. "The best part was meeting outstanding leaders throughout our country," says Klipstine.

COMMANDER'S AIDE

William "Billy" Moriarity
Woodbridge, V.A.

Just from traveling with Butch already, I've learned more about the Legion than I ever knew existed," says Billy Moriarity. After his term expires, Moriarity plans to take all he has learned from his travels and put it all to work as Commander of Woodbridge Post 364.

Before Moriarity was chosen as Aide, he was on track to lead his Post this year. This seven-year member is First Vice Commander and has served as chairman of Children and Youth, Ways and Means and the *Show Your Colors, America!* campaign.

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN

The Rev. Robert J. Sweeney
Greenwood Lake, N.Y.

The Reverend Robert Sweeney once was active with other community organizations. "I resigned all others to be able to dedicate myself to the Legion," says Sweeney, a member of Arthur Finnigen Post 1443.

This focused dedication is also noted on his resumé. The Roman Catholic priest and Vietnam War Army veteran has served as Chaplain for the Goshen Post, Arthur Finnigen Post, Orange County, and the Department of New York. Sweeney has also served on New York's God and Country Committee.

NATIONAL TREASURER

George A. Buskirk Jr.
Indianapolis, Ind.

George Buskirk Jr., an Indianapolis attorney, was appointed as National Treasurer. His appointment came after Webber LaGrange retired after serving 20 years. LaGrange will remain with the Legion as a consultant.

Buskirk, a member of Frank McKinney Post 510 and an Army veteran of the Vietnam War, is senior vice president and trust officer at Union Federal Savings Bank in Indianapolis. He is also a brigadier general and assistant adjutant general of the Indiana National Guard.

Buskirk, and his wife, Maureen, are the parents of three children.

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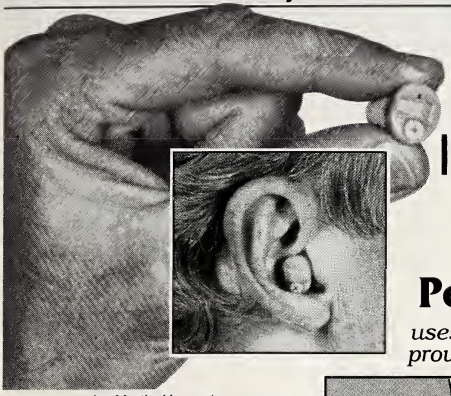

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MaxiSound™

Personal Sound Amplifier

uses sophisticated micro-miniaturized circuitry to provide affordable, in-the-ear sound amplification

by Martin Howard

For the last couple of years, I've constantly had to ask people to repeat what they just said to me... I've turned up the volume on the TV so loud that everyone in the house complains... and my wife and children tell me that I'm speaking too loud.

Naturally, I've denied everything. I didn't want to admit I knew that I was having a slight hearing problem. I was hoping it would go away, all by itself, without doing anything about it! But, deep down inside, I knew I needed a little extra help in the hearing department, and lately, I needed this extra help more and more.

My wife was so tired of me asking her to either speak louder or repeat everything she said. We were having arguments over my hearing. Finally, she insisted that I get some help. She told me to buy a hearing aid.

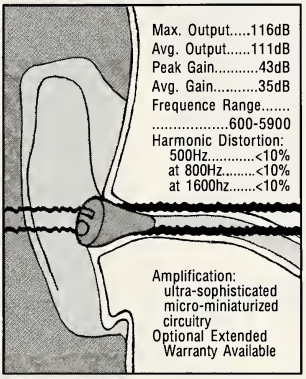
Sure, just what I need. A bulky, ugly, ill-fitting and heavy hearing aid sitting behind my ear. And, the darn thing will probably rub the skin off my ear too!

She laughed at me. No, it's nothing like that - science and technology have revolutionized the audio industry. The product I'm talking about is called ***MaxiSound***. It's a personal amplifier and is very different from the hearing aids you are describing.

MaxiSound is so small and compact that it fits inside the ear canal (it's almost invisible). There are no wires, no behind the ear devices and it doesn't cost a fortune. Not only that, but its super sensitive circuitry is designed to maximize your natural ability to hear sounds*. ***MaxiSound*** can make speech louder, and the sound is crystal clear, pure and natural.

MaxiSound worked so well for me that I am now marketing them direct to the consumer. And, I know that they'll work for you too! *It's great to be able to hear the TV clearly again.*

Let me tell you a little more about them. They are ideal for amplification of faint sounds like distant lectures or outdoor wildlife. Each amplifier features an individual on/off and volume control. Its one-size-fits-all is comfortable and comes with a replaceable soft rubber tip, 300 hour battery, cleaning tool, storage pouch and instructions. ***MaxiSound*** *is made in the USA*, and is comparable to other sound enhancement systems that retail for up to $1000.00. Separate maintenance kit includes: 4 replacement tips, 4 batteries, extra cleaning tool and detailed care instructions.



"After seeing your ad in the newspaper, I decided to take a chance on your product. Imagine my surprise when I first tried your sound amplification product and it worked great. The amplification seemed to balance out the hearing between my left and right ear. I am completely satisfed with both the sound quality and amplification of your MaxiSound product."
Dr. George T. Stallings

Your satisfaction is guaranteed or return for a full refund of purchase price (less P&H). Because we work directly with the primary source, you can purchase a pair (left and right) ***MaxiSounds*** for less than one of our competitor's units. *That's guaranteed.*

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*Not sold for use as a medical device. Consult a hearing specialist if you have a serious hearing problem. Individual experiences may vary depending on severity of hearing loss.

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Impact resistance	Average	Excellent	**Excellent**
Feedback	Frequent	Limited	**Limited**
Telephone use	Yes	Yes	**Excellent**
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pair	$2000.	**$599.90**	**$279.95**

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Database Helps Gulf Vets Locate Health Records

THOUSANDS of Persian Gulf War veterans who have had difficulty in obtaining copies of their "missing" in-theater medical records might be able to locate their files through a recently established Department of Defense project.

DoD is working with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Mo., and the Department of the Army to create a consolidated database to retrieve medical records for all patients treated in Army, Navy and Air Force hospitals.

"Our goal is to inventory any known surviving hospital record from the Gulf War and create a database with names of all U.S. military and coalition forces and civilians," says Dr. Bernard Rostker, the Pentagon's special assistant for Gulf War Illnesses.

The need for the database grew out of widespread concerns expressed by Gulf War veterans and organizations such as The American Legion about the difficulty in locating records.

"Their records were never lost or destroyed," claims Mike Boyle, an investigator on Rostker's staff. "If veterans didn't know the name of the hospitals that treated them, there was no way of finding their records."

The medical records fall into two categories: individual and inpatient hospital treatments. Individual health records include information on clinic visits, diagnostic tests, immunizations and dental care, and in some cases, there are treatment summaries of inpatient care. Members' histories of medical treatment remain with them throughout their military careers. After retirement or separation, the records are transferred to the VA's Record Management Center in St. Louis, Rostker said.

Inpatient treatment records are created each time a person is admitted to a military medical facility. If the patient is evacuated to another facility, the original treatment records accompany the patient and a copy of the record is retained for the hospital's files. The records are sent to the record center within five years.

Rostker says his office's goal is to assist veterans who require records to establish VA claims for service-connected illnesses, as well as those who wish to keep track of their medical conditions.

To obtain copies of inpatient medical records of veterans deployed to the Gulf, contact the Gulf War Outreach Task Force at **(800) 497-6261** and request a data search. The request form will be mailed to them. A signature of the veteran, or next-of-kin if the veteran is deceased, is required.

Individual health records of Gulf veterans are archived at two locations. The VA maintains records for Army veterans discharged after 1992, and Air Force, Marine Corps and Navy veterans discharged after 1994. To obtain copies, veterans should contact the VA at **(800) 827-1000**.

For all other records, veterans should write to the National Personnel Records Center, 9700 Page Ave., St. Louis, MO 63132.

Blast from the Past

VETERANS who participated in atmospheric nuclear tests or were part of the occupation forces of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, are eligible to be tested for the presence of plutonium.

To confirm eligibility for the test, obtain more information or to request testing, atomic veterans should contact the Nuclear Test Personnel Review program at **(800) 462-3683**. Eligible veterans who request and consent to the test will receive materials for self-collection of a 24-hour urine specimen. The local VA medical facility will package and ship the specimen samples to a laboratory for analysis.

"Plutonium is the only radioactive material—of the hundreds of radioactive materials—released in nuclear explosions that can be measured in the human body years after exposure," notes Chet Stellar, chairman of the Legion's National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission. "In the case of nuclear explosions, plutonium enters the body through food or inhalation."

The VA claims that while the urine analysis (bioassay testing) provides no "useful medical information," any positive result should be taken seriously by affected veterans.

"Veterans' privacy should be safeguarded, but if you are aware of an atomic vet who has tested positive, please inform the VA&R Division staff in Washington," Stellar says. "We don't need to know the veteran's name, merely to know if they have tested positive; this helps us oversee the VA process and ensure that it is administered well."

If a veteran who tests positive has filed a VA claim for disabilities related to ionizing radiation exposure, the results should be submitted as new evidence to support the claim. Those who have not filed a claim are advised to consult their personal or VA physician.

Please report any positive test results or direct questions about the test to Matt Puglisi, assistant director, VA&R Division, at **(202) 861-2772**.

Bank on It

THE VA has launched a program to directly deposit most VA insurance payments in the bank accounts of 100,000 recipients.

"Veterans and their beneficiaries won't have to worry if their checks are lost in the mail or stolen," says VA Under Secretary for Benefits Joe Thompson. "Electronic fund transfer will give them the peace of mind of knowing their payments are guaranteed to be on time, every time."

The VA began late last summer mailing letters to veterans and beneficiaries receiving monthly insurance payments, explaining the advantages of direct deposits. At press time, VA's Insurance Center says it plans to follow up by mailing notices to veterans and beneficiaries until all 100,000 recipients of monthly insurance payments have been contacted.

EFT, the VA claims, is less expensive, faster and safer than mailing checks. Federal law requires that beneficiaries receiving monthly U.S. government payments, with some hardship exceptions, must be paid through direct deposit.

In January 1999, the VA will offer the EFT option to its insurance policyholders and beneficiaries who are paid less frequently, including some 1.2 million policyholders who receive annual dividends.

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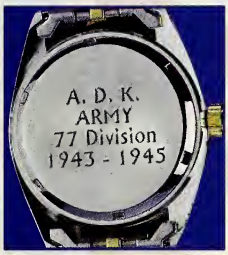

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The Veterans' Connection

VETS® is a service that provides information about military reunions, helps veterans find old buddies and arranges reunions, travel and accommodations.

REUNION INFORMATION

This month there are 147 military reunions listed on these pages. In addition, VETS® has information on more than 12,000 other reunions. Call weekdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Central time. Normal long-distance charges apply.

Phone: (573) 474-4444
Fax: (573) 474-7904
e-mail: vets@vets.org
Web site: www.vets.org

If you know the VETS® five-digit number assigned to your ship or unit, please give it to the operator. The number is printed after each outfit's name listed in the magazine. If you don't know the number or do not see your ship or unit listed in the magazine, VETS® operators can still provide you outfit information. Units enroll in VETS® daily.

PLANNING A REUNION

VETS® will help you arrange your outfit's reunion at no cost and save money in the process. Finders/Seekers® services are included free for VETS® managed reunions. VETS® also will maintain reunion coordinators' mailing lists and unit archives, and handle all reunion publicity needs.

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Write: **Finders/Seekers®, P.O. Box 901, Columbia, MO 65205;** or call **(573) 474-4444.** MasterCard/VISA and Discover accepted.

OUTFIT REUNIONS

Reunion coordinators can enroll their units in VETS® by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to VETS®, P.O. Box 901, Columbia, MO 65205. Unit names are published one time a year.

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442nd Tac Ftr Wing/442nd AF Reserve Assn #20827
504th 8omb Grp Assn (WWII) #20859
509th Comp Atomic 8omb Grp #20867
Avn Cadets (Childress A8, Jul 44) #19028
CDE ASTRP Reunion #23726

AIR FORCE

1st/69th Pilotless 8omb Sqdrn #18882
3rd Air Rescue Grp, 2157th Air Sea Rescue Sqdrn (Korea, 54-55) #11592
22nd 8omb Wing, 19th 8omb Sqdrn #15025
98th Air Refueling Sqdrn #19935
102nd AC&W Sqdrn (48-65) #15060
319th Trans Sqdrn (Grand Forks AF8, 62-65) #24067
6912 RSM (Landsberg/8ingen, Ger, 54-56) #24063
E8-66s #24073
Pilot Class 48-A #11448

ARMY

1st Cav Assn, 1st Sqdrn (Attch to: 1st Arm'd/Americal/101st A/B divs) #19352
1st Cav Div, 61st FA 8n #23105
1st Cav Div, 8th Cav Rgt #16677
5th ASA, 8605th AAU & 5th Det, 2nd Sig Serv 8n (Hawaii, 50-56) #13836
5th Int Div, 10th Rgt, A Co #16319
34th Int Div, 168th Rgt #15842
47th Int Div, 164th Rgt, Service Co #22882
72nd FA 8de, (182nd/177th 119th 772nd) #16023
73rd Tank 8n (Korea/Ft Bragg/Ft Benning/Desert Storm) #23475
76th Engr Const 8n (Korea, 50-53) #23016
76th Gen Hospital #16149
82nd Engr (C) 8n (WWII) #15976
99th Int Div, QM Co #23740
99th Signal 8n, C Co (WWII) #22603
100th Int Div, 374th FA 8n #16493
100th Int Div (FL chapter) #15483
101st A/8 Div, 1st 8de (Sep) (65-68) #23741
111th Intel Corps Grp (61-62) #24071
124th/208th FA 8ns Assn #19070
158th RCT "Bushmasters East" #22341
168th/983rd FA 8ns (WWII) #14766
188th Gen Hospital (WWII) #24066
196th LI8 Assn (VN 65-72) #10153
385th MP 8n, C Co (Karlsruhe, Ger 66-68) #24070
474 Sig Avn Const Co (SCARWAF) #15876
510th Tank 8n (Sullivan 8ks, 51-57) #23226
526th Arm'd Inf 8n (WWII) #11216
534th FA 8n #19946
599th FA 8n #22527
701st TD 8n (WWII) #10801
793rd/501st MP 8n (8amberg, Ger 71-73) #23730
862nd Engr Avn 8n #19406
865th Engr Avn 8n #16603
6811/6812/6813th Sig Sec Det (WWII, ETOUSA) #13072
Camp Gordon Johnston Assn #23367
DCS Class AAA 10 #22138
STRATCOM LL 8n (Okinawa, 66-67) #23733
XIII Corps Assn (WWII) #15530

COAST GUARD

USCGC 8urton Island WAG8-283 Assn #22413
USS Adm C F Hughes AP-124 #13491
USS Adm E W Eberle AP-123 #13493
USS Adm H T Mayo AP-125 #13489
USS Adm W L Capps AP-121 #13175

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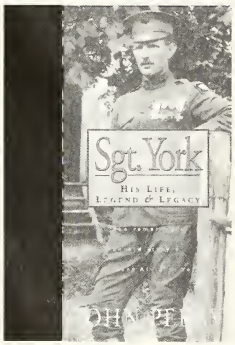

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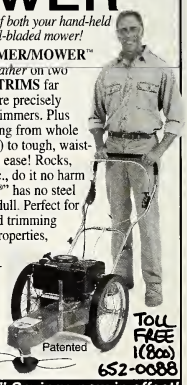

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6th Def Bn/Defenders of Midway Island (41-45) #17081
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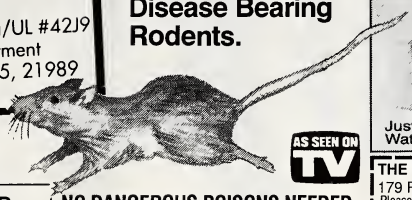

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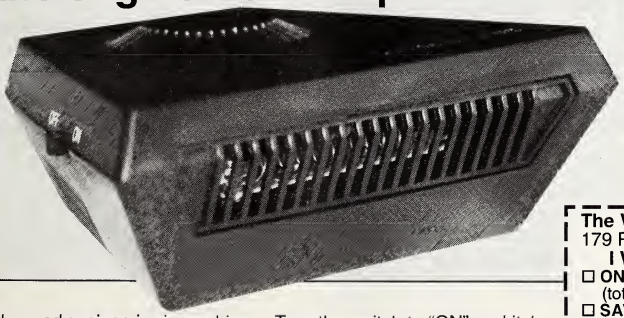

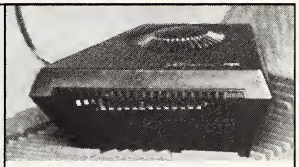

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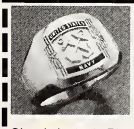

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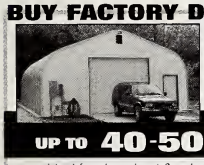
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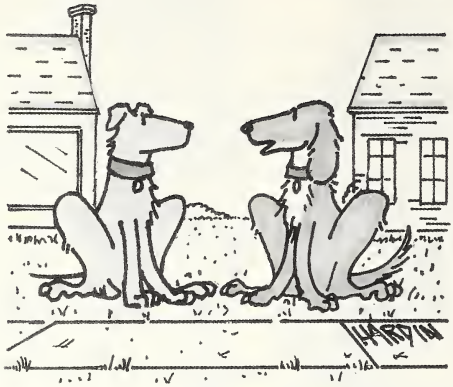


"I've heard the 'Call of the Wild,' but it's never as strong as the 'Whirr of the Can Opener.' "

"A perpetual holiday is a good working definition of Hell."

—George Bernard Shaw

A Boastful Toast

Here's to the man who is wisest and best.
Here's to the man whose judgment is blest.
Here's to the man who's as smart as can be.
Here's to the man who agrees with me.

Scared Straight

Today, schools seem to operate this way: Teachers are afraid of principals. Principals are afraid of the superintendents. The superintendents are afraid of the board of education. The board is afraid of parents. The parents are afraid of children. The children are afraid of nothing!

Birthday Suit

When Eve said she had nothing to wear, she really meant it!

Nailed 'Em

This country has come to feel the same when Congress is in session as when the baby gets hold of a hammer.
—*Will Rogers*

Sneak Attack

The person who refuses to tackle difficulty head-on usually is surprised when it kicks him from behind.

Uncommitted

I don't like to commit myself about heaven and hell—you see, I have friends in both places.
—*Mark Twain*

Game Face

A dim-witted fan goes to the local ball park and takes his place in the stands. Half way through the first inning, someone behind him screams, "Hey, Mac!" The fan jumps up, knocking his bag of popcorn into hair of the man seated in front of him, and turns around and futilely looks for whoever is calling out the name.

The fan refocuses on the game, and two innings later, he hears the call again, "Hey, Mac!" This time, the fan spills his soda into the lap of the guy in front of him, turns around and looks again for the face behind the voice.

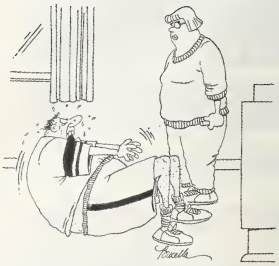
In the last inning, the familiar cry sounds again, "Hey, Mac!" Flustered, the fan gets to his feet, turns around, faces the crowd behind him and screams back, "My name's not Mac!"

What Ales You?

A ham-and-cheese sandwich walks into the local tavern, takes a seat, and says, "I'll have a scotch and soda, please." The bartender looks at the sandwich with an odd expression on his face and responds, "Sorry, I can't serve you."

The sandwich gets upset, pulls out his money and slaps it down on the counter. "Look, I've got cash. I can pay for this. Why can't I get a drink in this joint?"

"Can't you read the sign?" the bartender asks. "We don't serve food."



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